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HEART TO HEART.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

Lo! a storm, like a bird of prey,
Swoops upon our little bark;
Clouds shut out the light of day,
And the world grows strangely dark—
Oh, the gloom that's round about us!
Oh, the angry lightning's mark!

Sweet my darling, clasp me close!
Put your little hand in mine;
I can see your face is white
When the lurid lightnings shine—
Oh, the terror of the lightning!
Oh, the darling that is mine.

Lay your head against my breast;
Put your arms about my neck,
Death is full of endless rest,
Past all storm, and past all wreck.

Oh, the waves are very chill!
Clasp me closer, heart to heart!
Death may take us if he will,
But it shall not be apart.
Kiss me! Ah, the waves sweep o'er us,
But I have you on my heart.

EBEN E. REXFORD.

The Cost of Conquest.

BY CLEMENTINE MONTAGU.

CHAPTER IV.

"B. C."

He dreamt not of a foe, or if his fear
Foretold one, dreamt not of a foe so near;
For other dreams his feverish mind employed,
Of rights restored, variety enjoyed. —*Cowper.*

Dr. Andrea Guicoli was a shrewd and clever man, and the case of the young Englishman so singularly left alone in the hotel at Valetta peculiarly interested him. When the dead body of the servant was removed from the room, he bent over the bed and asked what next he could do to serve or relieve the invalid, who was evidently suffering much.

"Nothing, thank you," the young man replied. "I feel as though I could sleep. Will you give me something composing and leave me quite alone for an hour. I shall be better able to think what to do by that time."

The doctor felt his pulse, and acceded to his request.

"Repose is the first thing necessary to you," he said. "I will send the draught, but I do not like to leave you quite alone. In your weak state a return of faintness or spasm would be dangerous, to say the least of it."

"But I wish to be alone," Philip answered, with a good deal of irascibility. "Quite alone, do you hear, with no shuffling feet about the door, or prying servants in the lobby? If I want anything I'll ring."

"As you please," the doctor said, thinking the young man rather rude, but laying his brusqueness to his illness. "I will take care you are not disturbed after you have the draught. Perhaps you would like me to give it to you myself, as you find a difficulty in moving?"

"Difficulty! That's a mild way to put it," said Philip Reynell, with a faint laugh. "I'm as helpless as a log. If you wouldn't mind the trouble. I shall have to be very dependent on you, doctor, I am afraid; but I can afford to pay well for all that is done for me. Will you mention as much to the people down-stairs; they don't know anything about me, you know."

"I will serve you in any way I can, be sure of that," and the doctor left the room with what Philip Reynell imagined was a very inquiring look at him as he lay.

"Now, what does he fancy?" he said to himself, when the door closed, and he was alone. "Is he watching me? What can he make of me if he does? Who I am and what I am is patent enough to any one whose business it is to ask. It isn't his. Perhaps he thinks he won't be paid. I'll soon set his mind at rest on the score. Philip Reynell, of Boscobel Abbey, does not travel without money or credentials."

He spoke the name aloud, and lingered on the syllables as though he liked the sound.

"Philip Reynell, of Boscobel," he repeated. "A fine inheritance to be going home to, with no one to lay a finger on a penny or to dictate to me in any way. Young, good-looking, and—"

A sharp spasm of pain seized him as he spoke, and he sank back on his pillows.

"Ah, my heart!" he murmured. "What if I should not live to see Boscobel after all? I must be quiet—the doctor says so—tranquil, have no excitement, no trouble. So I will when I get home—now—well, when poor Burroughs is buried, I sha'n't have much to worry me. I must make the doctor my letter-writer, my hands are of no use to me."

Somewhat cynical and bitter it would seem his illness had made him, very different from the gay, warm-hearted lad who had left Allahabad so hopefully. Katherine Branscombe had never heard him speak of Boscobel in such a tone; it had always been full of regret for his dead father, when he named his patrimony to her, but men do not always lay their hearts bare to the women they love, and it would seem as if the new owner of Boscobel had not. Triumph, and triumph only, was predominant now, when he thought of the future.

Dr. Guicoli soon returned with the draught, which he administered with much kindness to his new patient. He was a tall, awkward, angular man, very thin, and looking, in his extreme length of limb, as if his body were not made for his arms and legs. His was a shape that might be ascribed to the "'prentice hand" of Dame Nature, rather than to her skilled workmanship.

His hair was iron gray, straggling and rough, and he wore heavy gold-rimmed spectacles, which aids to vision by no means obscured the brightness of his keen, dark eyes. He took snuff in inordinate quantities, more than his nose could conveniently accommodate, so that he usually had a little reserve of his favorite stimulant in the plaits of an enormous shirt-frill, which protruded from his shabby black vest. This shirt-frill was the only part of his costume Dr. Guicoli was particular about, so that with his daily clean linen and otherwise shabby attire, he presented rather an incongruous appearance.

ON THE BEACH AT MALTA.—THE INTRODUCTION.

But with all his oddities he was one of the most skilful physicians in Europe; his was no purchased German degree, or easily-won Edinburgh diploma, but a position gained by the brain-work which makes a man old before his time, and withers up the freshness of youth almost before the threshold of manhood is past. He had his well-deserved reward in fame and prosperity, in the power he had to combat with disease, and in the grateful testimony of those he cured to his skill and attention. More than one crowned head, laid low by disease, had been glad to summon Dr. Andrea Guicoli to their aid, and he might, had he chosen, have been resident physician at more than one court.

But his heart was in Valetta. Under his ungainly exterior there beat a heart as warm and as romantic as that of the veriest boy in his first love dream. In the crowded churchyard lay the one love of his life—a young girl of obscure origin, to whom he had plighted his troth before he went forth, full of hope, to study in the ranks of the army of science soldiers. How he struggled and saved through the years he was away, how Annetta toiled and hoped, only themselves knew. They met only at rare intervals, and hope was their sole friend. He was successful at last. The goal was reached, the honors gained, and he returned to Valetta to take a good position there, and to find Anneta dying of a malignant fever which was decimating the population of the island.

From the hour in which he laid his betrothed wife under the sod Andrea Guicoli went his way as if, save to be tended and helped in illness, there were not another woman on the face of the earth. No wiles could tempt him into matrimony, no beauty lure him to forget Annetta. He lived alone, a stern, silent, solitary man. Despite his sternness and silence, he could be, and was, very gentle, and it was in his gentlest manner that he lifted Philip Reynell up, and put the cup to his lips. When he had drained it, he said—

"You are very kind. I don't know how to thank you."

"Get well—that will be thanks enough," the doctor replied.

He spoke very fair English, with only a slight accent, languages being a branch of study in which he was an adept. Then he straightened the bedclothes and smoothed the pillows like a practised nurse, and turned to leave the room.

"Try and sleep now," he said. "You want rest more than anything."

"I think I do. Oh, Dr. Guicoli, one word before you go—about poor Burroughs, you know. Will it be absolutely necessary to have an examination—a *post mortem*, and all that sort of thing, I mean?"

"Quite, my dear sir; the death was so sudden—so strange in every way."

"Sudden, but not strange. Burroughs had heart disease. The doctor of the Euphrates told me he might die at any moment. I would much rather there was no such investigation made."

"The authorities will insist upon it, unless I can verify the cause of death without, and I could not do that."

"Not as a physician?"

"Not at all, unless I knew it."

"Not if you were paid for it?"

"I could not be paid for doing what is impossible. Not all the wealth in Valetta would tempt me to say I knew a thing when I did not."

Nor would it. The doctor was one of those staunch sticklers for the truth who would have faced death rather than utter a falsehood, and he turned upon Philip Reynell rather a suspicious look.

"Do not seek to avoid publicity in the matter," he said. "It may look as though you wished to hide the cause of the death."

"Make people think I murdered my servant—eh, doctor?" Philip replied, with another unpleasant laugh. "Oh, examine away as much as you like, only don't bring any of the details to me. Announce the death in the papers, and send a notice to England, in case the poor fellow had any relations. His name was David; I don't know his age."

"You didn't know much of him, then?"

"Very little. I picked him up on board the Euphrates. My own man met with an accident, and broke his leg, just as we were starting. He was a bad lot, a disgraced man, going home—a regular Q.H.B."

"A what?"

"A Q.H.B.—a 'Queen's Hard Bargain.' That's the regimental slang among the men for a fellow that's dismissed the service in disgrace. Burroughs was going home dismissed, and I took a fancy to him."

"And you were not disappointed?"

"No; he did very well. You won't pull the poor fellow about more than you can help, will you?"

He seemed strangely sensitive on this point—one which, it seemed to Dr. Guicoli, could have no possible interest for him one way or the other.

"There will be no pulling about, my dear sir," he replied. "All that is necessary I can do in the time you will sleep, I hope, after that draught. Try and forget all that has happened, and I will see your servant's place as efficiently supplied as is possible in the island."

He left the room, and Philip Reynell lay thinking.

"I was a fool to make a fuss about it," he said to himself. "Of course there must be an examination—the poor chap won't feel it now. I wonder if he had any relations. I'll overhaul his traps when I'm able to get up and see. There's no hurry about that."

He dropped off into a doze, the beginning of the sleep he was to take, when he was startled broad awake again by hearing his own name in an English voice close under the open window of his room.

"Philip Reynell," it said; "are you sure?"

"Quite sure."

The second speaker was Dr. Guicoli, and Philip listened intently while he gave a short account of his arrival and his servant's death.

"Poor old Phil," the first voice said; "will you take me to his room, doctor? He'll be glad to see me, I know. We've been friends from the time he was a lad till I went home on leave, a year ago. Say Bruce Chartham, of the Springers, please; I've only half an hour to spare. I'm awfully sorry I did not know he was here till this minute, and now we're just off."

Bruce Chartham and Philip Reynell had been great friends out in India, and no doubt the lonely young man would have been only too glad to have seen his old acquaintance, but the doctor's potion had been thoroughly effectual, and the waiter sent up to his room returned with the intelligence that he was fast asleep.

"And I must not wake him, I suppose?" said Lieutenant Chartham, as he stole into the darkened chamber for a sight of his friend. The ship that was to take him back to India was getting her steam up in the harbor, and he could not stay.

"I would not answer for the consequences of rousing him," the doctor replied. "I gave him such a strong opiate that—"

"Oh, you know best, of course. I should like to have spoken to him though. Poor old fellow! he's awfully altered. I don't think I should have known him."

"Indeed!"

"No; he was as fresh-looking a chap as I ever saw out yonder, brown and healthy. He seems to me to have grown fairer, whiter, you know. Do people change their complexions like that?"

"Illness changes everything. Something is due to the green shade of the curtains. Shall I open them?"

"No; don't disturb him. Tell him when he wakes, I was here, and that I'll tell them at Allahabad I found him in good hands. I hear he's to marry our colonel's daughter. She's a gem of a girl."

"He is a lucky young man."

"She is a lucky young woman; twenty thousand a year and a place like Boscobel Abbey are not picked up every day—and he's as generous as he is rich."

"So I should fancy from his manners. Would you like to see his servant?"

Philip Reynell started in his sleep, so violently that the bed shook with the momentary spasm, and the doctor went up to him, and put his hand on his forehead. It was damp and clammy with a cold perspiration. He turned to the young officer.

"He is very weak," he said. "It was a momentary start, nothing more. Would you like to see the body?"

"No, thank you. I never did like to see a corpse. I didn't know him, so there would be no object gained."

"You never saw your friend's servant?"

"No; he was a cavalry man, I hear, coming home to be dismissed for bad conduct."

"Just so. Mr. Reynell told me so to-day."

"Ah, Phil always had philanthropic fancies for helping people out of scrapes. I must be off. Will you tell him when he wakes that I was here, and how sorry I am, and all that, you know?"

Lieutenant Chartham was not very gifted at expressing himself, and rather apt to repeat his observations, but Dr. Guicoli saw how sorry he really was, and promised to be the bearer of all the kind messages he left for his friend.

"What was this man Burroughs like?" the lieutenant asked, as they walked to the harbor together, for the doctor liked the young man's *bonhomie*, and Mr. Chartham expressed his opinion of his new acquaintance afterward by saying that the grave Valetta physician was "a jolly old cock."

"Well some such a man as his master," was the doctor's reply. "About the same size, I think, and a handsome fellow. By the way, Mr. Chartham—"

"Well."

"I want to ask you a question."

"A hundred, if you please."

"Are bad characters in the army branded anywhere?"

"Yes, on the breast—'B. C.'"

"Would a man coming home disgraced as this Burroughs was, be branded in India or at home—in England, I mean?"

"In India, of course."

"You are sure?"

"Certainly. They are dismissed the service with the brand out there; Government is obliged to send them home. They have to work their passage, as it were. They get nothing but their food on board ship."

"And the brand is B. C.?"

"B. C. in Roman letters."

"And indelible?"

"Nothing but canterizing will take it out. It is pricked into the flesh with an instrument on purpose, charged with some preparation which never comes out."

"Thank you."

"Why did you wish to know? Did the mark on that poor chap puzzle you? I suppose you had a *post mortem*?"

"Many things puzzle even the wisest of us," was Dr. Guicoli's somewhat enigmatical answer, and he took leave of Lieutenant Chartham with a gravity that made that young gentleman think that Philip Reynell's case was a very bad one indeed—and that he should never see his old friend again.

CHAPTER V.

A TRUE REYNELL.

Yet in my lineaments they trace
Some features of my father's face,
—*Parisina.*

Katherine Branscombe, left behind at Allahabad, bore the separation from her lover as such women do bear the trials and worries of life. She did not sigh, and weep, and sentimentalize, and show all whom it might concern how she sorrowed for him now gone away. Not even when the news of his detention at Alexandria reached her, and she heard audible fears for his life expressed by her friends, did she break down; her cheek might pale and her eye lose its lustre, but she went about with calm hopefulness, praying "for help whence help alone could come," and trusting to each mail to bring her better tidings.

They heard of the arrival of the Euphrates at Malta, then of her passing Gibraltar, then of her reaching her destination at Portsmouth, but there came no special news of Philip Reynell.

"Telegrams are always unsatisfactory things, Kate," the colonel said to his daughter, when Katherine's pale cheek turned paler still, as the day for the mail passed and there were no letters. "It's all right, my girl; no news is good news."

"There are so many places he could have written from," she said, while her father reminded her of his illness, the difficulty of writing at sea, and all the other circumstances which might have prevented Philip's writing to them.

"Nothing would have hindered me writing to him," she said, passionately; "nothing but death, and that is what has stepped between us. I shall never see him again, never!"

The presentiment which oppressed her before Philip's departure was on her still, and she could not shake it off.

"See him again, my darling!" he exclaimed. "Tell me so when I dance at your wedding. I mean to dance then, Katie, and show the young folks what spring-heeled old fogies there are left in the world still. Well, corporal, what is it?"

It was a letter at last. The corporal explained how, through some mistake, it had gone to one of the officer's bungalows. It was not in Philip's hand, but it was from Malta, where they knew no one, and they felt sure it related to him."

"He is dead," said Katherine, with quivering lips, as her father tore open the letter.

"The paper would have been black-edged in that case," he replied. "No, darling, he is not dead, but the man he took for his servant is. This letter is from a doctor there, and speaks very hopefully of him."

The letter which the hapless Burroughs had begun and never finished was enclosed in one from Dr. Guicoli, giving a succinct account of all that had passed and of Philip Reynell's progress toward recovery.

"He is able to sit, and has been carried down-stairs once," he wrote, "and I am in great hopes that he will leave for England next week. I proposed the Euphrates, which will be here in about a fortnight, but Mr. Reynell expresses the utmost dislike to troop-ships, or the company of soldiers in any way. He has invariably refused to see such officers as have happened to be here, and desires me to inform you and Miss Branscombe, who, he says, must imagine for the present all he would say to her, that he has made up his mind to quit the army as soon as he can make the necessary arrangements. He is still troubled sadly with the galvanic affliction in the hands, of which the servant writes in the enclosed letter, but promises himself to be able to write next mail. I am a bad hand at transcribing expressions of endearment and affection, but I am to assure Miss Branscombe of his unaltered attachment and love for her, and yourself of his kindest regard and esteem."

"Poor Phil! To think of his being ill and worried like that," the colonel said. "Don't look so troubled about it, Kate. He seems to be in very good hands. We shall hear next mail."

Which they did—a few lines, in an almost illegible scrawl, which no one would have known for Philip Reynell's handwriting, saying that except his hands, he was almost well, and on the point of starting for England by the Peninsular and Oriental Company's steamship Penelope.

The colonel and his daughter felt puzzled There was something, both in the doctor's letter and Philip's own, which they could not understand. They were unlike him in tone, graver and stiffer than he was wont to be; and Katherine shed bitter tears—she scarce knew why—over this poor scrawl, the first letter she had ever received from her betrothed. There had been no need of letters between them in the happy time before he went. They had been together in in the same station—latterly in the same house—and had learned to know each other as those should who take their stand side by side in the battle-array of life's army. Now it seemed to her that there was a something rising up between them—a shadow, whose blackness she could not penetrate—and she felt a sick fear at her heart which not even the knowledge of his safety and recovery could drive away.

"I wonder you don't get leave, and go after him," Mrs. Scorby said to the colonel one day, when Philip Reynell's name happened to come under discussion in her presence. "A young fellow with a position and prospects like that ought not to be left alone to be ill in any out-of-the-way place he may chance to drop into. Isn't Miss Kate afraid of his being nursed by some pretty Maltese, whom he may marry out of gratitude?"

"Madam, you do not know either Lieutenant Reynell or my daughter," was the colonel's somewhat haughty retort, "or you would know such a thing was impossible."

"Bless me! I didn't mean to offend you," the lady retorted. "But such things do happen. He is rich and attractive, and going home alone. There's no knowing whom he may see, or what he may do when he gets to Boscobel. You know what the song says, Miss Branscombe—

'When we are far from the lips that we love,' &c.

I should advise you to look after your lover, that's all."

Kate's lips quivered. Any allusion to Philip Reynell stung her to the quick, and she turned away from the somewhat vulgar, though well-meaning, Mrs. Scorby, while her father answered for her.

"No man who wants looking after is worth it, Mrs. Scorby. Katie has no need to go to Europe for a lover."

"Bless me! how touchy they are about it," the major's lady said to Mrs. Sloper afterward. "I don't believe they feel sure of him now."

"Time will show," that lady replied.

And time did show—more than those who were watching the shifting kaleidoscope of human life deemed possible.

The arrival of Bruce Chartham, who came straight from Malta, brought back the roses in some degree to Katherine's pale cheeks. The lively, good-natured, though somewhat thick-headed young lieutenant had always been a favorite of hers, and now that he brought direct news of Philip, she liked him still more. His advent ended the curious doubts that had oppressed her about her lover's safety. He was alive; his old friend had seen him, and she was satisfied. Lieutenant Chartham, having been once violently in love with Katherine Branscombe himself, knew precisely what sort of details would be acceptable to her, and had stored up in his mind all the news he could recollect about Philip's arrival at Malta.

"You are sure you saw him, Lieutenant Chartham?" Kate asked. "You know, or can guess, how anxious we have been, and, somehow or other, the idea got into my head that we were being deceived, either by that doctor—what is his name?"

"Guicoli? A jolly old fellow, though very queer and eccentric. I don't think he'd deceive you. He seemed very anxious about poor old Phil."

"You saw him?"

She repeated the question with an earnestness that showed how she had been brooding over her fancy, whatever it was, and he hastened to reassure her.

"Oh, yes, I saw him."

"What did he look like? How did he seem? Was he cheerful? Ah, you will pardon my asking so many questions, I know; but I feel as if I must go mad if I do not have some certain news."

Her excitement was very unlike her usually calm manner, and he hastened to allay it as best he could.

"I assure you I saw him, Miss Branscombe. I stood by his bedside, and had the doctor's assurance that, with rest and quiet, he would do well. He was changed; so much so, that I don't think I should have known him; but I had not seen him for a year, and he was wasted by illness, and, more than that, the room was darkened by green jalousies, which always cast ugly reflections; but it was my old friend's face, minus the eyes, which were shut. It was a dreadful business, the death of his servant, and upset him dreadfully, Doctor Guicoli said. They had been having a *post-mortem*, and all that sort of thing, you know; and he—the doctor, I mean—wanted me to go and see the body."

"And did you?"

"No!"

"I wish you had."

"Why?"

"I should have liked to have known what kind of a man this Burroughs was, that is all."

"Well, I had the curiosity to ask, and I was told that he was much the height of his master—a little taller, if anything—and something darker in complexion."

"Darker! Then he must have been as dark as some of the natives—as that punkawallah there. Philip is very dark for an European."

"His illness has bleached him. I never saw such a change in that respect. He is as fair—or rather white—now as any Englishman I ever saw."

"Thank you for all you have told me," she said, bidding him adieu. "Don't forget it. I may want you to repeat it some time."

"Now, what has she got in her head, I wonder?" the young man said to himself, as he went to his own bungalow. "I suppose she fancies it is out of sight out of mind. I don't think it is with Phil Reynell. I wish I had woke him up, that I might have brought a message straight from

his lips to her ears. She's a noble girl is Kate Branscombe, and nothing should ever worry her if I had her in my keeping.

And while Katherine Branscombe was sorrowing for his illness at Allahabad, and friends of the family in England were wondering when the young master of Boscobel would come to claim his own, Philip Reynell was recovering at Malta, under the almost fatherly care of Dr. Gaicoli. After the funeral of Burroughs he had grown much better. In a very few days he was able, with the assistance of the servant the doctor recommended to him, to look over the few possessions the unfortunate man had left behind him, and to sort his letters and papers, which had accumulated and got into confusion during his illness.

There was nothing to show that David Burroughs had any relations among the things belonging to him. A small bag held all his worldly goods, and he appeared to have no correspondents. A disgraced soldier going home to be dismissed has seldom many belongings, and Philip Reynell's dead servant seemed to have been poorer in this world's goods than even a man in his position might be expected to be.

"Put them altogether," Philip said to his new attendant, a native of Valetta, who had been a courier, and spoke half a dozen languages indifferently, and was very smart and active. "See that they are safely kept. Some one may inquire for the poor fellow when we get home."

With returning strength came a longing to get away and the active business habits of an Englishman. The whole hotel soon began to feel that there was an inmate of mark among the guests, and the court that was paid to the young Englishman was tremendous. With the assistance of Guiseppe, as his new servant was called, he looked carefully over all his papers, telegraphed to his agent in London, and his steward at Boscobel, and wrote business letters, for Guiseppe was almost as good a scribe as Burroughs had been. He made him tie up and docket all his letters, and arrange his papers for him.

"I have been a sad careless fellow hitherto," he said. "It will not do at Boscobel. I shall take you there with me, Guiseppe, if we agree."

And Guiseppe had bowed to the very ground and thanked the signor, who had apparently forgotten the faithful Edwards, fretting over his enforced stay at Bombay, and wearying for the time when he might rejoin his master, to whom he was deeply attached.

In due time a gentleman came from London, who announced himself as Mr. Turner, the London agent of Mr. Reynell. Philip greeted him with *empressement*.

"I am not sure I should have known you again," he said. "But I was such a boy when I left England."

"I think I should have known you for a Reynell," Mr. Turner replied; "you have the family eyes and features, but you are not nearly as dark as you bid fair to be when a boy."

"It's this illness that has taken the color out of me," Philip replied. "When I left India I was as brown as need be; I shall get it all back again when I can get out more."

To Mr. Turner he delegated all his correspondence now for the few days he would remain at Valetta.

"All but my letters to my wife that is to be," he said. "The mistress of Boscobel is waiting my summons to follow me at Allahabad."

Mr. Turner said he had heard of the young lady, and heard nothing but praise. Altogether then the new master of the Boscobel estate seemed to have a very Elysium of happiness before him.

The cabins for Philip Reynell, his agent, and his servant were duly secured on board the Penelope, and she was to sail the next day, when two gentlemen came up to Philip's chair, as his man was drawing him along the beach, and announced themselves as fellow-voyagers.

One was a tall, kindly-looking, elderly man, who held out his hand with the air of an old friend.

"I must introduce myself," he said, "though I feel as if I knew you already. I am Captain Haughton; you will have heard your father speak of me."

"Indeed I have—my dear father—I am so glad to make your acquaintance. I shall not feel now as though I had not a friend in all England. I have often heard my father say he owed his life to you."

"As one soldier often does to another, my boy, I helped him out of a scrape at Sobraon, that was all. You are not so like him as you bid fair to be when you were a round-eyed youngster of five or thereabouts. I haven't seen you since."

"Am I not? I was considered like him."

"So you are in some points, eyes especially. You'll pass for a Reynell anywhere."

"Should I? It's good to know that," said Philip, with a laugh, and then Captain Haughton introduced his friend as Mr. Hastings, who shook hands with Philip with a hand that was as cold as ice, and trembled like a leaf.

"That's a lucky young fellow," Captain Haughton said, as they turned away. "He is a true Reynell."

"Is he?"

"In features I mean. You knew the major—can you not see the likeness?"

"Not in a single trait—he reminds me of—"

"Of whom?"

"Of some one who made the bitterest page in my life. He is her living image."

CHAPTER VI.

GWENDOLINE HAYDON.

This was not the beauty—oh, nothing like this—
Text to young Nourmahal gave such magic as bliss;
But that loveliness, ever in motion, which plays
Like the light upon autumn's soft shadowy days,
Now here and now there, giving warmth as it flies
From the lips to the cheek, from the cheek to the eyes.
Lalla Rookh.

Captain Haughton grew very intimate with the son of his old friend on the passage home from Malta. He found the young man quiet and unassuming—rather more so than might have been expected from an officer in her majesty's service, going home to take possession of such a patrimony as Boscobel Abbey and its belongings. One or two little *gaucheries* observable at table and elsewhere made him fancy that Philip's education had not been so carefully attended to as he fancied.

"I suppose it is roughing it in India," he said to his friend Mr. Hastings, who was also going home. "The lad went out too young. He should have remained in England till he was thoroughly formed, morally and physically."

"He'll pick up everything fast enough at home," that gentleman replied. "How old is he, Haughton?"

"Let me see—twenty-two or three, at the very outside. I know he's not more."

"He looks thirty."

"The effect of his illness. He'll lose a year or two in his looks when he's quite well. He's a handsome fellow, and like his father."

"So you say. I can't see it. I am sure poor Reynell never had that furtive, shrinking look in his eyes that his son has. When he is suddenly spoken to or startled, he has exactly the look of an animal at bay. I've seen it in stags many a time."

"Perhaps the Reynell ancestor was one of those noble animals, and the eyes have descended. You have queer theories, Hastinga. I wish you liked the lad as well as I do."

"I wish I did; but I can't."

Mr. Hastings did not like Philip Reynell, though he couldn't tell why—except, as he told his friend, Philip's face reminded him of something unpleasant in his past life; and, though perfectly polite to him, he could not be cordial. Nevertheless, Philip gave him, together with Captain Haughton, a very pressing invitation to come to Boscobel with him.

"I should like such a dear friend of my father's to be with me when I see my home for the first time," he said. "I have not felt quite so forlorn in the world since I saw the kindly faces of you two gentlemen."

"You won't be friendless long," said Mr. Hastings, after they had accepted the invitation, and promised to be at Boscobel when the new owner took possession. "Money will buy everything now-a-days."

"It cannot buy friendship."

"It will buy such an imitation of it as will pass current anywhere," Mr. Hastings replied, with something of cynicism in his tone. "But you spoke of seeing Boscobel for the first time, Mr. Reynell. Have you never been there?"

Philip Reynell blushed, almost painfully. The color mounted all over his face, and then receded, leaving him very pale.

"One must speak by the card to you, Mr. Hastings," he said. "I should not have said the first time, though I may almost say I have never seen Boscobel. I have been there twice—once when I was very little. I have a dim remembrance of being carried through numberless old rooms—and once for a very brief call when I was about nine years old. Not having the slightest notion that I had any interest in the place, and standing very much in awe of my uncle who owned it then, my principal feeling connected with it was relief when my father brought me away."

"I don't wonder," Captain Haughton said, with a laugh. "Your Uncle Seymour Reynell was not the sort of man to impress a child favorably. Didn't tip you, I suppose?"

"No, that he didn't. However, I have not forgotten Boscobel. My father had a series of views of the house and grounds, which kept it in my memory."

"And how do you feel at the prospect of going there its master, the lord of all—eh, Phil?" the captain asked.

"As if it were all a dream," Philip Reynell replied; "as if I should wake up out of it in my soldier's jacket, to feel— What nonsense I am talking," he said, checking himself. "But I do feel as though it were all very unreal, and as though I were not myself, but somebody else all this time."

As they neared Southampton, he grew restlessly impatient for the end of the voyage. His illness, and the many vexations delays, had been too trying, and he was wild with longing to be ashore once more, and pushing on to his new inheritance. Guiseppe—whose other name was Santi—was most obsequiously attentive to his master, and expressed his delight that the end of the journey was so near. He did not impress Captain Haughton favorably, but the gallant captain had a universal dislike to foreigners, and not all the bows and grins and little attentions paid him by the *ci-devant* courier could alter his opinion.

At Southampton, Philip was met by two gentlemen—the steward of the Boscobel estates and the rector of the parish—who had come to give him friendly greeting and learn his pleasure.

"I did not have the carriage brought," the steward said. "It is a venerable family relic, and I thought you would not care to travel in such an antiquated tub."

Have the carriage brought! It seemed all like some wild vision to Philip, who had often been sorely pinched, living on his pay in India, to hear of carriages being brought for him all across England; and he laughed as he assured Mr. Thompson he should prefer travelling by rail, and entering his new dominions in the best carriage he could hire in Hereford. He had been very pleased to meet these two men—the one who had tended his father in his short, fatal illness, and the other who had laid him in the grave; and they were equally pleased with the simple, pleasant, feeling manner in which he thanked them for what they had done, and hoped the people in and about Boscobel would like him.

It was a very joyful sensation to Philip to be thus greeted and recognized immediately on landing after so many years of exile, and to make, as it were, a triumphal entrance to the home of his forefathers. Boscobel was reached in the evening, just as it began to grow dusk; but there was light enough left for Philip to see the crowds of eager faces assembled to welcome him, and for the tenants of the estate to have a good look at their new lord.

"I telegraphed to the butler," the steward said, "to have everything ready. They have not lost much time."

"And I to my wife," the Rev. Mr. Nottley added. "She will be there to greet us."

It was through a shouting crowd, under triumphal arches, gay with flowers, and bearing flags of welcome, that the last of the Reynells entered the house to which his father had only come to die. The men took the horses out of the carriage, and drew their new landlord up to the door of his home. No wonder he broke down under the effect of so much agitation. Weakened by illness, surprised at all he saw, and touched by the hearty pleasure of those around him, he leaned his head upon his hands as the carriage stopped amid the roar of hundreds of voices, and burst into tears like a very woman.

No one of his companions but liked him the better for it.

Mr. Hastings laid aside the feeling of prejudice he had when he saw the burst of genuine feeling, and pressed his hand warmly when he lifted his head again.

"Forgive my weakness," Philip said. "It seems childish, but I could not help it."

"Genuine emotion is never unmanly," said the kindly clergyman. "Welcome—a hearty welcome to Boscobel!"

And Philip stood up in the carriage, and bowed right and left, and thanked those present in a few broken words for their kindly greeting.

"Another time I will thank you better," he said, stepping down; and again they cheered with all the power of their lungs, and then went off to the big tents, where torches were already lighted, and a substantial supper provided for all and sundry.

Philip's eyes were very dim as he stepped over the threshold of his home, and saw the servants drawn up to receive him. They were still in mourning for his father, but the women had white caps and bows, and all were in a flutter of happy excitement. He just caught a glimpse of a group of handsomely-dressed ladies and gentlemen in a brilliantly-lighted room beyond the hall, and then he turned to a very aged man who stood amongst the servants, leaning on a staff. His hair was quite white and very thin, and his head shook with palsy. He had been on the estate, man and boy, for more than seventy years, and his father before him had been a retainer of the Reynells.

"You should be old Taffy," said Philip, holding out his hand. "I beg your pardon, I should say David, but my father always said Taffy when he spoke of you."

The old man laughed a feeble, senile laugh.

"Yes, sure, sir, I be Taffy, if you please. My service to you, Mr. Algernon—my service to you, sir."

"No, Taffy, no," said one of the men, shouting in his ear. "This is Mr. Algernon's son—this is Master Philip that was."

"Aye, aye, is it?" said the old man, dubiously. "I'm getting old, you see. I carried Mr. Algernon a baby in my arms many a time, and now he's gone and I'm left. People come to Boscobel to die now-a-days, not to live."

"Rather an ill-omened prophecy," said Philip, turning to the housekeeper, who had been trying to silence the old man. "Who takes care of him?"

"He lives down at the lodge, sir," she replied, with a courtesy, "with his granddaughter. Mr. Thompson said nothing could be done with him till your honor came home. He's past all work now."

"All his working life has been spent in the Reynells' service," Philip said, warmly. "He must never want or work more. It shall be seen to to-morrow. You are Mrs. Griffiths, I think?"

"Yes, sir," she replied, proud of being remembered. "I recollect your honor well as a boy. You came here twice in Mr. Seymour's time."

"I did. I should have known you anywhere. Years hav'n't changed you much," and he passed on, with kindly greeting to every one, making the servants think there never could be such a master, and Mrs. Griffiths shook out her black silk dress, and looked at her weazened old face in the glass, and began to think that she was one of those with whom "time stands still withal," and that she was quite an attractive woman in her old years.

Into the blaze of light, for the room was brilliantly illuminated, Philip passed with his friends behind him, and was conscious of bowing to several ladies, and being the centre of a fresh group of congratulating friends.

"My wife, Mr. Reynell," said the rector, leading forward a sweet-looking elderly lady, in black satin and white lace, *the* dress of all others that an old lady looks well in, and Mrs. Nottley greeted him warmly.

"Your mother and I were very dear friends," she said. "You will admit me into the category of yours, will you not, Mr. Reynell?"

"Into the dearest of them," he said, warmly. "But call me Philip, if you please; I should not be 'Mr. Reynell' to my father and mother's friends."

"Philip be it then," she said, smiling. "And now let me introduce you to my daughter, in love if not in blood relationship, my husband's ward, Miss Gwendoline Haydon."

A fair girl, with a bright, sunny-looking face, and light-brown hair, falling upon her shoulders in feathery ringlets, stepped forward and bowed low in answer to Philip Reynell's salutation. She was no finicking fine lady, this orphan ward of the rector's, no dressed-up doll, full of airs and affectation, though her fortune was a hundred thousand pounds, and she was free to do what she liked with it. She was the child of the dearest friend Mr. Nottley ever had, and had been left motherless at a very early age, and Major Haydon, not long surviving his young wife, had bequeathed his child to his friend, enjoining him to bring her up as he would a daughter of his own. How well the trust had been fulfilled was evident in Gwendoline Haydon's simple, thorough nature, her splendid health, and her complete education. Her fortune, always large, had been doubled by the making of some railways across an estate belonging to her, and she was now one of the richest heiresses in the kingdom. Mr. Nottley had guarded well and successfully against fortune-hunters. Gwendoline was comparatively unknown as yet, and free to attract and be attracted as she listed.

Philip Reynell knew nothing of her fortune when he held out his hand to her as Mrs. Nottley presented her. He saw nothing but the gleam of her tender blue eyes and the waves of her golden hair. From the moment that she bent her pretty head in reply to his salutation she was all the world to him—the one love of a man's life which poets rave about and matter-of-fact people scoff at, came on him all in a moment, and shut out all memory of the past, all hope and fear for the future.

Alas, for poor Katherine Branscombe, waiting with patient faith among the roses at Allahabad! Alas, for the kindly colonel with his thorough belief in Philip's honor! When a passion like this takes possession of a man's heart there is no room for honor, truth, or self-respect—they are all swallowed up in the fiery torrent of what he fancies is lasting and undying love.

Gwendoline was all unconscious of the mischief she was doing, but she could not help saying to herself that she had never seen such a handsome, pleasant man as the new master of Boscobel, and feeling glad that life at the rectory would not be quite so dull now he was come.

And then they went in to a composite sort of meal, such as is pleasant after travelling—neither dinner nor tea, but an amalgamation of both; and though, of course, Philip did not take her in, she sat by him, and he talked to her, and she was supremely happy.

"They are getting impatient outside," said Mr. Nottley, when their repast was over. "You must show yourself to them, and make a speech, and so forth, you know."

"Oh, I'm ready. Which is the way?"

"Up-stairs to the balcony of the long drawing-room. You will be just over them there."

It was an exciting scene on which they gazed when they reached the balcony and looked down. Torches held high showed the eager faces of the crowd, and lit up the little group at the window. Philip stepped forward amid a roar of applause, and bowed to the assembled throng.

"My friends—" he began; but even as he spoke, a sharp scream stopped him, and looking down to see where it came from, he saw, right underneath him, his servant, Guiseppe Santi, supporting a woman who appeared to have fainted.

The light shone full upon her pale face, and he knew it in a moment. The last time he had seen it had been thousands of miles away in India, and he deemed it there still. He never thought to see it here, at Boscobel, and the crowd, lights, friends, and all reeled before his eyes, and, but for Mr. Nottley's supporting arm, he would have fallen to the ground.

CHAPTER VII.

MISS HAYDON'S OWN MAID.

Trust no future, howe'er pleasant;
Let the dead past bury its dead.
—Longfellow.

The person who had fainted was Harriet Myers, Miss Haydon's own maid. She was a tall, dark, rather foreign-looking woman, some years older than her mistress, and, truth to tell, was somewhat of an incubus to the independent, spirited Gwendoline. The heiress had fought against the establishment of an "own maid," and a suite of apartments to herself, as long as she could, but Mrs. Nottley was peremptory. She knew what was due to Gwendoline's position better than she did herself, and would not listen to her pleadings of how contented she was with the family life at the rectory, and how perfectly Betsy, the confidential attendant of the rector's wife, performed the duties of the toilet.

"Betsy is all very well for me, my dear," Mrs. Nottley said, "but you are different. A young lady who is supreme mistress of one hundred thousand pounds must have a proper maid—one who thoroughly understands her duties."

And Gwendoline had pouted, and declared that she hated her money, and wished she had not a hundred thousand pence if her fortune was to prevent her doing as she liked; but she was overruled in the end, and her guardian's wife permitted to look out for a maid for her.

Her choice fell upon Harriet Myers, strongly recommended by a friend, who had just returned from India, as a trustworthy, efficient abigail. Certainly the lady in question, wanting very much to get rid of her maid, her husband being in the hands of the Bankruptcy Commissioners, and not wishing to offend Miss Myers, to whom she owed considerable arrears of wages, spoke almost rapturously of her qualifications, and ignored the fact that India is not quite the place to learn fashions in.

But Harriet Myers was by no means a stupid person, and feeling that she wanted an easy place thought Miss Haydon's service would suit her very well. So she frankly owned to her shortcomings, and agreed to take the place if she were allowed a month in London first, in which time she would guarantee that she would make herself *au fait* in the latest ways of fashionable life and dress.

The month was granted, and she came to Boscobel Rectory, and took possession of her new mistress, about three months before the home-coming of Philip Reynell. She was a quiet, reserved woman, not much liked in the servants' quarters of Mrs. Nottley's house; they hardly knew what to make of her, the country lads and lasses who formed the simple, sociable little colony under Mrs. Nottley's rule. They thought her a foreigner at first, but she explained to them that her brown skin and slightly *outré* manner arose from her Indian life. She had been in India, at Seakote, for three years, she told them, and had never meant to leave it, but that her master and mistress had had to do so, and she had no resource but to accompany them.

She never told them so in plain terms, but, somehow, the idea grew in their minds into certainty before long, that "Miss Myers," as she was called from the first, "had had a disappointment," as young people of romantic notions are apt to call a prematurely ended love affair. That she had suffered some wrong or unhappiness at the hands of a man they were sure, and the simple-hearted country girls, whose flirtations extended only to bashful nods from rustic adorers, or awkwardly offered and accepted flowers, or perhaps a quarter of a mile walk on their Sunday out, looked at her with awe and envy, as being of a superior order, gifted with the wonderful knowledge that only the sting of love brings with it.

Whatever her sorrows might have been, Harriet Myers proved herself an unexceptional lady's-maid. Whatever toilet Gwendoline might please to wear, and her fancy was erratic, and rather eccentric in the matter of dress, she always looked like a picture—the effect was perfect, however attained; and Miss Myers had the satisfaction of knowing that she was often asked about as a clever and industrious *artiste*.

Gwendoline hardly liked her. She was of the frank familiar nature that would fain be on chatting terms with her maid, but Harriet was reserved and silent, and never spoke to her mistress except in the way of duty. A little conversation had passed between them when the news of Philip Reynell's speedy arrival reached the rectory. Gwendoline had all a girl's curiosity about the romantically introduced new owner of Boscobel, and worried her guardian with all sorts of questions concerning him. Mr. Nottley gave her all the information in his power; he had it from the agent who went to meet Philip at Malta, and his ward was tremendously interested in the story.

"Only think, Harriet," she said to her maid, "what a strange succession of fatalities. He must be a very good young man."

"Why, miss?"

Harriet was but languidly interested in the new master of Boscobel. It seemed from all they heard that he would only reach home to die, as his father had done before him, if even he did that, and funerals and corpses, and the church bells tolling so close to their ears, were not pleasant things to talk about or endure.

"Why? Ah, you do not know," said her mistress, warmly. "His man met with an accident, and had to stay behind, and what do you think he did?"

"Got another, I suppose, miss; gentlemen don't stop long without a servant."

"Of course he got another! what a stupid thing to say, but whom do you think he took."

"Don't know, I'm sure, miss."

"Why the very worst man in all the ship, a regular bad character, going home in disgrace to be dismissed from the army. Oh, how you are pulling my hair, and it's all on one side. What is the matter with you?"

"Nothing, miss; the comb slipped. I hope I didn't hurt you."

"No, but do take care."

Gwendoline had seen her maid's face flush all over crimson, and then turn deathly pale as she spoke, and she watched her now, thinking she was ill. But whatever it was passed over, and the woman went on with her business as calmly and quietly as before.

"Took a bad character man, did he, miss?" she said. "Most gentlemen would be afraid to do that."

"I should fancy from what I heard that he isn't afraid of much," said Miss Haydon with a little laugh. "He took this wretched man partly for a whim, because he thought him apt and handy, but mainly because he wanted to give him one more chance to retrieve himself. Wasn't it noble of him?"

"Yes, Heaven bless him!"

"Why, you speak as if you knew the man. Have you heard the story before?"

"No, miss; I beg pardon if I make too free. I was thinking of the old time in India, and I've seen something of soldiers and their ways, and I can guess what a man would feel who had such a chance given him. Why he'd die for such a master!"

"Just what this poor fellow did."

The wave of hair that Harriet Myers was holding over her hand, received a twist and a turn by no means necessary to the development of Miss Haydon's head-dress, and the light died out of the gleaming black eyes of the dark-skinned lady's maid.

"Died, did he, miss? What a terrible thing for poor Mr. Reynell, and he so ill!"

"Dreadful, wasn't it? Mr. Nottley had a letter telling us how the servant had been found dead, and his master very ill; it very nearly killed Mr. Reynell. The announcement of the death was put in the Times—didn't you see it?"

"I never read the deaths, miss, I know so few people."

"I had it somewhere—ah, here it is," and Miss Haydon turned out the contents of a little box on her toilet-table, and took up a scrap of paper. "David Burroughs, servant to Philip Reynell, Esq., of Boscobel Abbey. Poor fellow, just as he was beginning a new life too."

Harriet's hand trembled so much that she was fain to stop awhile before she could go on brushing out her mistress's hair.

"Did you know him or his master in India," she asked, "that you look so pale and startled? Sit down there a minute, and recover yourself a little."

The faintness or whatever was the matter with Harriet Myers passed off as quickly as it came, and she resumed her employment in a moment.

"I did know David Burroughs in India, miss, and I have seen Mr. Reynell; he was stationed at Allahabad. I was there once with my mistress."

"And Burroughs?"

"Belonged to 'ours,' miss. I knew him quite well by sight."

Harriet Myers spoke of the regiment to which her late master had belonged in the absurd fashion which women use as though they were part and parcel of the army instead of being regarded by Her Majesty's Government and the authorities at the Horse Guards as unavoidable evils to be catered and cared for at the lowest possible cost.

"And which was 'ours?'" asked Gwendoline, with a smile. Everything connected with the army was a sealed book to her as yet.

"The 11th, miss," replied the maid. "Burroughs was sent home, and I never heard of him after."

A little involuntary sigh told its own tale. Burroughs had been the hero of the "disappointment," of which even Miss Haydon had heard rumors, and the heiress looked at her handmaid with something of curiosity. Love, with its scathing, withering fire, had not come nigh her yet; she was free and heart-whole, and it was a little event to come in contact with one who had passed through the tremendous ordeal of a love sorrow.

"You will never see him now," she said, softly, and the touch of sympathy in her tone was not lost upon her maid.

"No, miss."

"Yet it is pleasant to know that he was so comfortably placed at the last, that he was in a fair way to do better. Then you have seen this Mr. Reynell? What is he like?"

"I could hardly say, miss; he was with a lot of other officers when I did see him. I think he was a good-looking, darkish young gentleman. I should know him again."

She said no more, and her mistress asked her no further questions about the young gentleman whose home-coming was now so near; and Mrs. Nottley, who knew nothing of Katherine Branscombe far away in India and Philip's troth-plight with her, began to build all sorts of airy castles relative to her darling Gwendoline and the master of Boscobel.

He came, and fell headlong into the snare woven by Miss Haydon's bright eyes, and forgot the faithful, single-hearted girl to whom he had been all the world only a few short months before.

Guiseppe Santi arrived a few hours in advance of his master, and was introduced to Miss Myers amongst the servants at Boscobel. She was there with her mistress and Mrs. Nottley, and something in her un-English appearance attracted him. She spoke French, too, and he hated English, which he declared gave him the toothache, though he spoke it fluently enough, and gave him quiet greeting in his own tongue, or rather the tongue he was most used to speaking, and the familiar accent struck pleasantly on his ear.

He had a peculiar interest in her eyes. He had come straight from Malta, where the man whom she had loved had died. Perhaps he had seen him—knew more about the affair than her mistress had told her. She would question him. She found her opportunity in the lull that immediately preceded the arrival of the travellers. Her mistress was dressed, and her arrangements made, and they were for a moment alone in the garden. She put her question with a tremor he did not fail to mark, though he took no notice of it.

"Mademoiselle means the servant who died at Malta?"

"Yes."

"I did not. Mr. Reynell and his servant arrived after dark. The latter died in the night, not many hours after. I was not in the hotel at the time."

"Then you did not see him?"

"Pardon me, yes, I did, the next day."

"After he was dead?"

"Yes."

"What did he look like? How did he look?" she asked, eagerly. "How did you come to see him?"

"I assisted the doctor at the examination. It was necessary to have one, of course."

Again she begged to know how he looked, and he described the appearance of the corpse as nearly as he could, wondering at her extreme curiosity on the subject.

"Thank you," she said, gravely and quietly, when he had told her all there was to tell about Dr. Gaicoli, his new master, and their sojourn at Malta. "Knowing Mr. Reynell slightly I was interested, you see. I wish he would come."

But when he came she was out of sight, something wanted her immediate attention, and her absence was not noticed. She was shut in one of the back rooms at Boscobel, her hot face hidden in her hands, sobbing over the memory of a past never to be recalled—a past which the home-coming of Philip Reynell was bringing vividly before her. Under her cold and somewhat prim exterior she had such a passionate nature as is a curse and torment to a woman when it belongs to her; and all the love of which such a nature is capable she had bestowed upon David Burroughs. No one noticed that she was not among the servants who were curtseying and bowing in the hall, no one missed her, she was not wanted, and no one cared much about her, except one, and that was her new acquaintance Guiseppe. She had interested him, he could not understand her, and he liked to understand everything and everybody, and he had noticed her creeping away along a passage on the ground floor which led to a long range of rooms not much used. He made a tour of inspection outside, and soon discovered her. Having done so, he softly raised the window and looked in. "Mademoiselle is in trouble," he said; "can I help her?"

"No, thank you."

"But come out and see the people, mademoiselle," he pleaded. "You will be missed."

"Not I, no one cares enough for me."

"Yes, one—I do," he said. "Allow me to escort you, no one will notice that you have been in tears, it is dark now. My master is coming out on the balcony to speak to the people, I want you to see him."

"Yes, I want to see Mr. Reynell," she replied, and allowed him to lead her to the front of the house, where, as we have seen, she fainted at the sight of the master of Boscobel. Guiseppe Santi bore her quietly away before there was time to make much commotion. In a very few minutes she was herself again, and apologized to the Maltese, who was regarding her with a look of perplexity and curiosity which puzzled her a good deal.

"I have had a good deal of fatigue lately," she said, "and we were talking on a very painful subject to me just now. Do you think, Mr. Santi, I could see your master to-night for a moment?"

"See Mr. Reynell? Impossible!"

"I think not. Tell him Harriet Myers wants to speak to him; I don't think he'll refuse."

CHAPTER VIII.

A LETTER FROM INDIA.

There are some shrewd contents in yon same paper
That steal the color from Bassanio's cheek.
—Shakespeare.

Philip Reynell was not a man to allow any emotion of surprise or fear to overcome him for more than a moment at. Whatever there was in the face of Harriet Myers to agitate him, the discomposure passed away directly. He steadied himself on Mr. Nottley's arm, and went on with the speech he had commenced. It was terse and to the point.

"He would not weary them with talk," he said, "but he hoped they would understand how grateful he was for their presence and welcome, and he trusted he should be able to show them as time went on that he was worthy to stand in the place of the Reynells who had gone before him."

Captain Haughton and his friend watched him minutely all through the evening. The former with a kindly feeling for the son of his old friend, and pleasure to see him so tenderly affected by the associations of Boscobel; the other with a prejudice he could not overcome, but which was growing less and less as he saw what seemed really good qualities manifesting themselves in him. He had remarked his agitation at the sound of the scream, and, though he could not see the person who uttered it, he knew it to be a woman.

"Now, what does that mean?" he asked himself; but Philip Reynell himself offered a solution of the mystery. They had gone in from the balcony, and were going to disperse to their rooms to dress, for there was to be a ball in the old banqueting room of the abbey, not a state affair, but a gathering of the tenants, their wives and daughters, to give pretty girls a chance of boasting in after years of how they had danced with the gentry when the squire came home. They are very feudal in old-world places such as Boscobel, and the squire was a monarch who reigned supreme in his own dominions. The accession of a new sovereign to the throne of the Three Kingdoms would not be half so much of an event in the eyes of the Reynell retainers as this home-coming of the heir. Then they would have flags, and shouting, and music, and ox-roasting, but no tangible king—now they had all the festivities, and the hero in whose honor they shouted, and ate, and drank, was to the fore as well. The old hall had been made as gay as flags and flowers could make it, and the country dames and damsels in toilets fearfully and wonderfully arranged were waiting the advent of the squire and his friends. Gwendoline Haydon and Mrs. Nottley retired to their rooms to make a little alteration in their toilets, and Philip Reynell turned to his friends.

"I saw a face in the crowd," he said, "that I did not expect to see in this quarter of the world—the woman who fainted. Does any one know who she is?"

"Miss Haydon's maid," the rector replied. "You saw her in India, doubtless?"

"Yes."

They went to their rooms, Philip marshalled to his dressing-room by his servant, and laughing at the idea of not knowing his way about Boscobel.

"The idea of having to ask the way in one's own house," he said. "I want a clue, like the woman some queen shut up or wanted to get at, which was it?"

Guiseppe showed his white teeth, and professed utter ignorance of the pretty romance with which somebody's fertile brain has embellished one of the dullest periods of our history; and then gravely informed his master that Mademoiselle Myers very much wished to be allowed to speak to him.

"Ah, that's the woman I saw you hugging just now. Miss Haydon's maid, isn't she? You hav'n't lost much time in making yourself agreeable in the housekeeper's room, it would seem."

But the valet disclaimed anything of the sort; it was purely accidental he said, Miss Myers being with him.

"I was just going to send for her. I knew her in India slightly. If her mistress's toilet is over, bring her here."

Guiseppe looked at his master narrowly, he hardly knew what he suspected, but Philip Reynell's face was imperturbable in its calmness and told him nothing. He was very pale, but that was the natural effect of so much excitement; there was no apparent nervousness over anything past, present, or to come. Yet, when the Maltese had left the room, the master of Boscobel paced up and down with excited strides.

"How will it end?" he said to himself. "Will she ruin me? Will she try? Bah! what a fool I am prating here, where the very walls may have ears for aught I know, like a stage idiot. Whatever she says she can but expose the boyish wildness of Philip Reynell's youth. I don't suppose any of my respected ancestors were saints or anchorites. She can't unmake me what I am—Philip Reynell of Boscobel Abbey."

Curiously selfish words on the very first night of his arrival, significant of his character had any one overheard them. Mr. Hastings heard them passing under the window on his way to the ball-room.

"Philip Reynell, of Boscobel," he repeated, "and no true Reynell in heart, or I never read a man's character."

Harriet Myers had fully made up her mind what she wanted to say to Philip Reynell before she was summoned by Guiseppe.

"I knew he would see me," she said, quietly, as she followed him to his master's apartments.

And he intended that he would make a third at the interview if possible. But Philip rendered that impossible by peremptorily ordering him out and shutting the door, and he found when he went round to the only other entrance to his master's rooms that it was fastened on the inside. There was the balcony left to him, and he climbed up the light ironwork which supported it and found the window open. To hide himself among the curtains was the work of a moment, though he found to his dismay that he could only hear a low murmur of voices, but not what they were talking about.

At length the interview came to an end, he heard his master rise and push back his chair, and speak in a louder tone.

"You understand?" he heard him say. "Betray how and where you know me by so much as a word or a look, and I'll set the police on you as a ——"

"No, no, not that," she implored, her voice rising in passionate entreaty. "Not that, though what use my worthless life is now I don't know. It seems to me there is no truth or honor left in all the world. There's none in you, Philip Reynell."

"Ah, I see you agree to what I propose," he said, "or you would not speak to me like that. Gracious heavens! It is enough to make my whole respected tribe of ancestry in the chapel yonder turn over in their graves to hear a Reynell bartering with a waiting woman for the keeping of a secret."

"They will turn over when you come to lie amongst them," she said, bitterly. "An honorable man will brook no companionship of such a degraded descendant. Keep your secret for me. I will do the same till you break your word. Look to yourself after."

The valet, from where he lay *perdu*, heard the chink of gold, as his master put some money into the girl's hand, and then, as the door was opened for her to pass out, he thought it time to retreat, which he did as he entered, and presented himself before his master very grave and placid, and rather fearful that Mr. Reynell would have to make a hurried toilet, as his friends were getting impatient.

"I dare say. It is too bad of me. However, I could not help it. I'll make haste, and make up for the delay. By the way, Guiseppe—"

"Sir."

"There's no occasion to mention to any one about that girl Myers having been here. I had occasion to see her, and I don't want

it gossipped over in the housekeeper's-room. You understand me?"

"Perfectly, sir."

"I don't mind satisfying your curiosity—of course you are curious; you needn't look meek, and pretend to deny it—so far as to tell you that Miss Myers met me once upon a time in India. She has confided that much to you by this time, I dare say."

"Yes, sir."

"I thought so. Well, I wasn't master of Boscobel then, nor ever dreamed of being so, and I led a life very much like other young men do. That young lady is cognizant of one episode in my career which I don't care for all the world to hear of, that's all. I sent for her to give her a word of warning on the subject. She will be silent. Do you be so, too?"

"I will, sir."

And then he thanked his master for his confidence, and inwardly resolved that he would "pluck out the heart of his mystery," by some means or other, before he was many months older.

There was no handsomer man than Philip in the company that had assembled to do him honor. The simple evening costume of the present day, which people revile without knowing how to improve, sat easily upon him, and made him look like one born to be the descendant of a long line of ancestry, whose pure blood had never known plebeian taint. Every eye was turned upon him admiringly as he moved about like a king among his people, with a kindly word and a bright smile for every one. Many a prophecy was uttered relative to him and the fair young heiress who, in a simple dress of white muslin, set off with blue ribbons, and a wreath of stephanotis crowning her fair curls, looked the very personation of innocent joy.

There were a couple below the salt who watched them with eager eyes—Guiseppe Santi and Harriet Myers. The valet was dressed almost as well as his master, and, with coral ornaments, and a splendid hothouse flower in his buttonhole, looked like some foreign count.

Harriet Myers was very pale, and there were dark rings under her eyes, and she watched her young mistress with rather a baleful look upon her face.

"She will marry him," she said to herself; "and may Heaven have mercy on her if she does. She'll find none from him."

Philip Reynell danced with as many people as there was time for—till, in fact, he was thoroughly exhausted. He was not quite well yet, and the nervous affection still remained in his hands. He could shake hands with his friends, or give a tolerably nervous grip to any good-sized object; but he could not hold anything small, and when he attempted to write the pen was apt to slip through his fingers, and make nothing but unintelligible splatterings on the papers.

Dr. Gaiooli had assured him that it was a mere nervous affection, which would pass away; but a doctor on board the Penelope, and another consulted at Southampton, shook their heads, and said they feared it might be permanent.

Philip had been by no means put about at hearing this opinion. So long as it did not affect his health, he said, it did not signify much; secretaries were plentiful enough. He had no need for writing this evening of gayety, and he gave himself up heart and soul to the pleasure of Gwendoline Haydon's society. She knew nothing of the dark-eyed girl, waiting with such patient faith for Philip Reynell to summon her to take her place by his side at Boscobel, nor any dark secret in his former life which made it necessary to pay her maid for her silence. She only saw him young, handsome and fascinating, and she offered up her heart a willing sacrifice at his shrine.

As for Philip, life had never seemed to him to begin till now. He had never drunk such deep draughts from the Lethean stream of love as he was drinking now, and before he had been many hours in her sweet company he had resolved to woo and win Gwendoline Haydon for his wife.

"They will give her to me," he thought. "Boscobel and its master are not to be lightly thrown away. I want to travel, and we can be married and off before any one in India can know anything about it. Kate will soon console herself. I was by no means her only suitor."

Her only favored one—the only man she had ever loved in all her pure life, Heaven help her—the only one she ever would love till her life should end—was Philip Reynell. How different in seeming from the man who could so heartlessly think of her and her wasted affection, Heaven alone knew.

Captain Haughton and his friend, Mr. Hastings, came to Philip's dressing-room, to say a last word of good-bye before they went to bed. They were going by an early train long before the tired master of Boscobel would be stirring. In vain he pleaded for a longer visit; both gentlemen had business in London which might not brook delay.

"Everything has gone off wonderfully well, Philip," said Captain Haughton; "but let me give you a word of advice."

"A thousand, if you like."

"Don't let that fair-haired heiress make you forget Kate Branscombe. If she's like her father, she's not a girl to be thrown off lightly like an old glove."

"Who's going to throw her off? Have I done anything very dreadful?"

"Only 'looked love into eyes that spoke again.' You'll turn that poor girl's head, and you're bound to my old friend's daughter—don't forget that!"

"I'm not to forget anything, it seems, amongst them," said Philip, testily, as the door closed upon them. "First that girl—confound her! how did she come here, I wonder?—and now Captain Haughton. I suppose I shall be my own master some time. Well, Santi, what is it? Yes, I'm ready to undress now. I suppose I shall be allowed to rest at last."

"A letter, sir," Guiseppe said, handing one on a salver. "It came this afternoon, and was put into the library."

He watched his master narrowly while he busied himself about the preparation of his night toilet, and heard him utter something very like a curse as he opened the letter and saw the signature of Katherine Branscombe. There it was, in the clear, almost clerk like writing, which was a peculiarity of hers—every letter as distinctly formed as if it were copperplate; no pointed m's or n's, or unintelligible scrawls, ever disfigured her letters.

He read it to the end, and then tossed it aside with a contemptuous "Pshaw!" into a drawer of the looking-glass. Guiseppe carefully extracted it afterward, and put it with the rest of his master's Indian letters. It was a patient, loving letter, but it told its tale of sorrow and meek endurance:—

"Allahabad, April 10th, 18—.

"DEAREST PHILIP—By the time you get this I hope you will be fairly established at Boscobel, and able to write to me yourself. It seems so hard to have to read letters written by a third party. You can't put your heart into them. Are you sure, Philip, that you still wish me to come to you? Your last says so—'as soon as arrangements can be made.' Of course, I don't know what 'arrangements' are necessary, but I'm full of fears. I seem to feel day and night that there is a shadow between us, through which I cannot penetrate—and I never lie down at night without dreaming that I am striving to get to you through some impassable barrier, or across an open grave. You laughed at my presentiment when you went away: is it only presentiment? Papa says it is purely physical, and that the heat is taking the 'tone' out of me. Perhaps it is so, for it is growing very hot. I wish we could get away to the Hills; but papa says he can't be spared. Mr. Manners gave anything but a hopeful description of you when he got here. Do let me have a line, assuring me that you are in a very different state now. I am waiting on, Philip dear, with the sick dread very strong at my heart that we shall never meet again. Oh, if there is anything in it—if you are ceasing to care for me—let me know it. Don't let me wear out my life waiting for a meeting, the very thought of which sends the blood through all my veins with a thrill. Papa is not very well: he is overdoing himself, I think. He sends his love: accept mine unalterably, whatever may happen, and believe me your own true KATE.

"Philip Reynell, Esq.

"P. S. Papa's old friend, Colonel Chumley, of the 4th, saw Edwards in Bombay. He was walking about, though lame, and said he should go home in the Alexandria. She sailed on the 8th."

Philip Reynell, when he had read the letter, made a rapid calculation. The Alexandria was due—had most likely arrived.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

ONLY A WOMAN'S HEART.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY C. M. T.

The cars were crowded to suffocation, and the windows could not be raised, for the rain was pouring down in torrents outside. Lazy men yawned, and babies cried; each one had his trouble. An old gentleman entered the car, he was very tired, having walked a mile to the station. He looked vainly about for a place to rest himself.

"Will you take my seat, sir?" said a pleasant voice behind him.

He seemed surprised. "No, I thank you," said he, for it was a lady who addressed him.

"Oh, take it sir," was the reply, "I am perfectly able to stand."

Immediately four or five gentlemen arose and offered her a seat, but May Brown did not do favors for the sake of being appreciated, so she politely declined and remained standing.

"Most extraordinary female that!" was the audible remark of a fat, sleepy-looking gentleman at the rear end of the car.

The iron horse snorted, and the car door swung open, the conductor shouting, "Evansville." It being a great business place, the car was rid of nearly all of its male occupants. May took a seat and gave herself up to her thoughts.

She was of medium height, hazel eyes, and her rich brown hair was brought to the top of her head in massive braids. She was not pretty, but it was a face that one would never tire to look at, being both sweet and intelligent. Her figure was fine, and showed off to advantage in the navy-blue suit she wore. She had been teaching school for the past six months and was returning home on a visit. As the train moved on, her thoughts went back to one year before, when, with some friends at the sea-shore, she had met with Paul Marston. He was the ideal of her dreams; it is no wonder that May fell a victim to the power of love. But he never showed any preference for her, she had given her love unsought for and unasked. He walked the world unconscious that a being lived and breathed for him.

May raised her eyes to the small mirror above her, and a pair of blue ones met hers that caused her to blush crimson. The object of her thoughts sat directly behind her. She turned and tried to look unembarrassed in spite of the tell-tale blushes.

"This is a most unexpected pleasure, Miss May," he said.

She soon regained her composure, and in a short time they were chatting gaily. He rallying her on an admirer who had been most obtrusively attentive the year before; every word of which conversation went deep into May's heart. After a while they began to talk about the pleasant summer they had spent together, and the time sped on golden wings.

"What has Miss May been doing since?" said he.

"I have been teaching school," she answered.

"Teaching school!" and he laughed. "You'd make a nice little school ma'am."

When, all of a sudden, there was a whirl, a crash—and all a blank.

When May came to she found herself upon the ground, three or four yards from the track. She slowly arose, and found to her amazement that she was not in the least hurt. There had been a collision, and the whole train of cars was shattered in pieces. Dead and dying lay all around her, there evidently was work to do. Her first care was to search for Mr. Marston, whom she found in a very bad condition, he being hurt internally. She ordered a carriage, and with assistance he was taken to a hotel, where he remained in an unconscious state for a week. During this time May never left him once. She was near him night and day; it was she who dealt out his medicine, and it was she who smoothed his pillow.

When he began to get better, May's conscientious scruples forbade her to stay longer, but she secretly wished him a slow recovery.

One afternoon, just as the last rays of the setting sun were sinking behind the western hills, she laid aside the book she had been reading to him, and mustering all her courage she said:

"Mr. Marston, you are getting better, and I think I am needed at home. I shall go in the morning train."

"May," he said, "you are not needed at home half so much as you are here. I don't want you to go, you have become indispensable to me. Will you marry me?"

We do not know what her answer was, but certainly they parted friends, and upon her left hand glistened a diamond ring.

For two months letters passed between them very often. Those were happy days to May. Each letter was read and re-read, until committed to memory. Then his messages became shorter and less frequent.

At last one came which read as follows:

"MY DEAR MAY:—I have always loved you as a brother loves a sister, but think we are not suited to each other, and would beg to be released from our engagement in the hope that you will find a husband who is far more worthy of you than I am.

"I remain,

"Ever your friend,

"P. W. MARSTON."

May was not weak-minded; she neither drowned nor hanged herself. But she never recovered from the blow.

It was only a woman's heart, but it was broken.

☞ The man who can't be happy unless his mother-in-law lives in the same house with him, isn't a resident of New York. He lives in Jersey City. He says she's the only woman who can tackle his wife successfully. They take up so much time in scolding each other that he has a peaceful life.

☞ A sheriff in Florida, who was called upon to resign, wrote back: "Your communication is received, stating that my resignation will meet the approval of the Governor. It does not meet mine."

AN ORDER FOR A PICTURE.

BY ALICE CAREY.

Oh, good painter, tell me true,
Has your hand the cunning to draw
Shapes of things that you never saw?
Ay; well, here is an order for you.

Woods and cornfields a little brown,
The picture must not be over-bright,
Yet all in the golden and gracious light
Of a cloud when the summer sun is down.

Alway and alway night and morn,
Woods upon woods with fields of corn
Lying between them not quite as real
And not in the full, thick leafy bloom,
Where the wind can hardly find breathing room
Under their tassels; cattle near,
Biting shorter the short green grass;
And a hedge of sumac and sassafras,
With blue birds twittering all around.
(Ah, good painter, you can't paint sound!)
These, and the house where I was born,
Low and little, and black and old,
With children, many as it can hold,
All at the windows open wide,
Heads and shoulders clear outside;
And fair young faces all a-blush,
Perhaps you may have seen some day,
Roses crowd up the selfsame way,
Out of a wilding wayside bush.

Listen closer—when you have done
With woods and cornfields and grazing herds,
A lady, the loveliest ever the sun
Looked down upon, you must paint for me.
Oh! if I only could make you see
The clear blue eyes, the tender smile,
The sovereign sweetness, the gentle grace,
The woman's soul and the angel's face,
That are beaming on me all the while,
I need not speak these foolish words,
Yet one word tells you all I would say—
She is my mother—you will agree
That all the rest may be thrown away.

Two little urchins at her knee,
You must paint, sir; one like me,
The other with a clearer brow,
And the light of his adventurous eyes
Flashing with boldest enterprise:
At ten years old he went to sea,
God knoweth if he be living now;
He sailed in the good ship Commodore,
Nobody ever crossed her track
To bring us news, and she never came back.
Ah! 'tis twenty long years and more,
Since that old ship went out of the bay
With my good-hearted brother on her deck,
I watched him till he shrank to a speck,
And his face was toward me all the way.

Bright, his hair was, a golden brown,
The time we stood at our mother's knee;
That beauteous head, if it did go down,
Carried sunshine into the sea!

Out in the corn-field one summer night,
We were together, half afraid
Of the corn-leaves rustling, and of the shade
Of the high hills, stretching so still and far,
Listening till after the low little light
Of the candle shone through the open door;
And o'er the hay-stack's pointed top
All of a tremble and ready to drop,
The first half hour, the great yellow star
That we, with starling, ignorant eyes,
Had often and often wished to see,
Propped and held in its place in the skies
By the fork of a tall red mulberry-tree,
Which close in the edge of our new-field grew,
Dead at the top—just one branch full
Of leaves—notched round and lined with wool,
From which it tenderly shook the dew
Over our heads, when we came to play
In its hand-breadth of shadow day after day,
Afraid to go home, sir, for one of us bare
A nest full of speckled and thin-shelled eggs;
The other, a bird held fast by the legs,
Not so big as a straw of wheat.
The berries we gave her she would not eat,
But cried and cried, till we held her still,
So calm and shining, to keep her still.

At last we stood by our mother's knee.
Do you think, sir, if you try,
You can paint the look of a lie?
If you can, pray have the grace
To put it surely in the face
Of the urchin that is likest me;
I think 'twas solely mine indeed,
But that's no matter, paint it so,
Two eyes of our mother (take you head)
Looking not at the nest of eggs,
Nor the fluttering bird held fast by the legs,
But straight through, down to our lies.
And with such injured reproachful surprise,
I felt my heart bleed where that glance
Went, as though a sharp blade struck
Through it—you, sir, know
What on the canvas you are to repeat,
Things that are fairest, things that are sweet,
Woods and cornfields, and mulberry-tree,
The mother, the lads with the bird at her knee.
But oh! that look of reproachful woe,
High as the Heaven your name I'll shout,
If you'll paint my picture and leave that out.

American Girls in Europe.

While visiting a school near Frankfort-on-Main, I asked if there were American pupils, and the preceptor replied, "No, we do not take them, they dress so extravagantly, they think and talk so much of their clothes, that they disturb the quiet, simple ways of our German girls; and we find their influence does us more hurt than their money does us good." In Dresden I knew an American lady who could not find a private school where they would take her daughter, for similar reasons.—*Dr. Mary Safford.*

☞ A Springfield (Mass.) paper says: The windy beard of Æolus himself, and all his succedaneous bags of atmosphere, besweept our segment of earth from long ere dawn of yesterday through a bitter twenty-four hours of extreme wintriness and physical and spiritual shiverings.

☞ The happiest man in the next House of Representatives will be Hon. William J. O'Brien, of Maryland. Mr. O'Brien is quite deaf in both ears.—*Cincinnati Commercial.*

☞ A Nashville reporter is said to have such large hands that he wears no jewelry here below, but expects, when he gets to Heaven, to be allowed to wear one of Saturn's rings as a compensation.

☞ "Canadian butter" is the taking title of an article sold in the English markets, which is found to be composed of "lard, tallow, dripping, palm oil, and the fat from certain seeds."

☞ A literary gentleman who has travelled over the whole world says that the ladies of the royal family of Russia cannot be matched for personal beauty.

☞ It is said that if Maud Muller had her life to live over again, and should meet the judge in this year of grace, 1873, she would sue him for breach of promise and obtain sufficient damages to make her family happy, or else shoot him, become a lecturer, and die rich and respected by all.

☞ The latest little joke on Cincinnati—coming, of course, from St. Louis—is that the Park City is building a Brobdignagian sausage for the Vienna Exhibition. It will require the Great Eastern to tow it across ocean, after it has been floated down the Mississippi to the Gulf. It is to be made in sections in a railroad tunnel, the hogs being driven in by the hundred and then subjected to hydraulic pressure.

☞ A Michigan conductor had the hydrophobia from the bite of a drunken man whom he put off the cars.

☞ A Fort Dodge, Iowa, man has been caught selling dog scalps for those of wolves, upon which there is a bounty.

☞ A man at Lebanon (Ill.) heard strange and fitful noises in his house until he could stand it no longer, and went groping about in the darkness, compelled, as it were, by an unseen presence. In a dark, damp passage-way he was touched on the nose by a cold, clammy finger. He shot twice at the invisible thing, lights were brought, and two bullet-holes through the family tea-kettle, which was swaying in the wind, showed that he had laid out the ghost, and also made a soldering bill of 25 cents.

☞ Two young men at Dresden, Mo., had a wrestling match for a wife—best two in three, side-hold and grape-vine lock barred. The smallest wrestler took the girl.

☞ The Attorney General has decided that letters not fully prepaid at the time of mailing should be charged, not with double the deficient postage, but only with the actual balance not prepaid. The Postmaster General has issued orders in conformity with this decision.

☞ The Rochester papers having exhausted the question, "Can fish hear?" are now laboring with the conundrum, "Are mice incendiaries?"

A NEW FRENCH PLAY.

The Paris correspondent of the New York Herald reports as follows of Sardou's new play, "Uncle Sam:"

The action of the play begins on a steamboat on the Hudson river. The scene represents, as well as the resources of a French stage will permit, one of our floating palaces. Among the passengers on this steamer are Samuel Tapplebot and his niece Sarah. Samuel is a type of the Yankee—all the good and bad points, the bad rather preponderating. When twelve, Samuel sold matches; at fifteen he was in the blacking line; at twenty he had made a fortune out of sugar. Then he became a chocolate merchant, and in this business he lost all he had made in matches, blacking and sugar; but fortune directed him into petroleum. He struck oil, and so, at the outset of the play, he was a millionaire. On board the vessel is a French marquis—De Rochemanne—a young nobleman travelling in the States for observation and adventure. He is a representative Frenchman. There is a Mme. Bellamy, who says disagreeable things; a Mr. Elliott, who is a journalist connected with the New York press, and, in addition, a politician, a member of Congress and a professional fiddler. There is also a *bizarre* character, who deals in money and is evidently a recollection of James Fisk, Jr. This creation carries the odium of the play. The first act tells you who the characters are. In the second you are introduced into a splendid hotel on Fifth avenue. Here Sarah is at home and the young Marquis comes with an offer of marriage. During this ceremony this conversation ensues:

HOW AMERICAN LADIES DISCUSS MARRIAGE PROPOSALS.

Sarah—How much are you worth?

Marquis—Worth? I don't understand.

Sarah—I mean are you very wealthy?

Marquis—Ah! Yes. Eighty thousand francs a year.

Sarah—Is your money well invested?

Marquis—In shares, land, vineyards.

Sarah—Bordeaux vineyards? None of your Catawba.

Marquis—Yes; but my dear Sarah—

Sarah—Do you receive your rents regularly?

And so on. Sarah is enchanted with her Marquis, and runs off with him to New port—"the Trouville of America." And so adventure follows adventure, in one of which the Marquis nearly loses his life at the hands of one of Sarah's admirers. The marriage nearly falls through; but, in the end, Rochemanne thinks that Sarah, with all her faults, will make a better wife than most Frenchwomen, and the curtain falls upon Sarah a marchioness. This is the plot of "Uncle Sam"—a slight plot, like "Rabagas"—but only meant to introduce types of American character.

A French Story.

The Paris *Soir* relates the following story: "A Mme. Bonneau, living in the Rue Descartes, was sitting in her parlor a few days since, awaiting her husband's return to dinner, when a man of wild and haggard appearance entered, and seating himself opposite to her, addressed her in the following terms: 'I am a great doctor; I can effectually cure all headache. I have heard that you suffer from that and I came to cure you.' The lady, perceiving that she had to deal with a madman, prudently seemed to fall into his humor, and asked what his method of treatment was. 'Simple enough, Madame,' said he, drawing a razor from his pocket, 'I cut off the head, and then after having well cleaned it, I replace it upon the shoulders.' Upon this he prepared to suit the action to his words. Mme. Bonneau, with great coolness, professed her readiness to submit to the operation, but suggested that she should fetch a towel from the next room to prevent her dress from being stained. Her visitor assented to the reasonableness of this suggestion, and she left the room, locking the door behind her. Upon her return with some police officers they found that the unfortunate maniac had cut his own throat, but not fatally. It was ascertained that he had escaped from a lunatic asylum at Clermont les Pres, and had been vainly sought for during a whole month."

A Rat Story.

A queer thing happened in Nashville, Tenn., last week. A gentleman, before retiring for the night, took the precaution to place his watch and chain under his pillow, that it might not be stolen without his being awakened. To his surprise he woke up the following morning to find it had unaccountably been spirited away. He remembered having heard his servant making a fire, and came to the conclusion that no one else could have taken it. He called the servant in and made inquiries about it. The servant denied having stolen it. This did not satisfy the owner, but the servant was, nevertheless, allowed to depart. His employer now instituted a thorough search. After looking everywhere about the room, he found the watch forced half-way into a rat-hole. He pulled it out, and, to his great consternation, found a rat at the end of the golden chain, in which it had become entangled and been hanged by the neck until dead.

The Vienna Exposition.

The times of the trials of agricultural machinery at the Vienna Exposition have been announced. They will take place on the Leopoldsdorf estate, about eighteen miles from Vienna, commencing on June 18th with hoes, root cutting, chopping and crushing machines; on June 20th with grass mowers, reapers and rakes for rye, wheat, barley, pasture and clover; on July 14th with threshing machines, straw-elevators, corn cleaning and separating machines, and on July 20th with steam ploughing, sowing, harrowing and rolling machines. Three hundred and five English acres have been appropriated for the trials of the reapers and mowers. This class of implements have been especially developed in the United States—and those manufacturers who intend exhibiting, should take care that their shipments are not made so as to arrive too late for competition.

Curious.

In the Boston Herald a strange story is told concerning a secret marriage. During the last eight or nine years, a wealthy widowed lady and her only son have lived together at the North End, the latter during all that time exhibiting every sign of the greatest filial devotion. During the latter part of January last he died suddenly; and after his burial, a young lady, for whom he had occasionally during life expressed a tender feeling, came to his mother, and, to the amazement of that lady, announced that for eight years she had been her son's wife. This she proved by documents, and she has put forth a claim for her share of the dead man's property. There seems to have been no sound reason for this concealment, and the affair will doubtless remain a mystery, unless the lady wishes to divulge.

☞ A Kansas legislator told how he voted for Senator something in this way: "I don't know just how it all was. One fellow got up and said J'ingalls, and then another said J'ingalls, and they kept on saying J'ingalls, until, at last, they called my name, and I said J'ingalls, too."

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

☞ Rev. Welcome Joiner, of Albany, does a large marrying business.

☞ An Ohio legislator has presented a resolution forbidding any more babies being named John Smith in that State.

☞ A Clevelander whipped seven policemen the other day.

☞ A Pennsylvania mother baptized her first born Parepa Nilsson Lucca Busk.

☞ Louisville announces its intention of building the largest hotel on the planet.

☞ A Davenport, Iowa, paper speaks of Rubinstein as "the famous foreign tenor."

☞ A Kentucky man offers to wager $100 that he can out-sleep any other man in the State.

☞ A new society fan has been made for the use of gentlemen who always sit cross-legged. The wind pusher is fastened to the man's foot, and by a movement of the toe a cooling breeze is thrown over a large space.

☞ Eleven small but practical jokers at Niles, Mich., daubed the door-knobs of a popular church with printers' ink lately. The shops did a lively trade in kid gloves next day.

☞ The Pullman Shooting Club of Indiana hunt in a palace car—so says an exchange—and if the palace car is like some we have suffered in, they find no difficulty in obtaining game, plenty of it.—*St. Louis Democrat.*

☞ A young doctor in Norwalk spends his leisure hours in practising on the cornet, and passers by, thinking an amputation is going on inside, are deluded as to the number of the man's patients.

☞ A Philadelphia woman having married off her ninth and last daughter, meekly folded her hands and died. "My life work is done" were her last words.

☞ Hard to Please—The Danbury *News* doesn't like the Patent Office reports. The characters are all overdrawn, and there isn't enough poisoning and shooting in the plot to keep the reader interested.

☞ John Clement, of Rock Island, Ill., will never stick his right thumb up to his nose and wiggle his fingers in derision again, owing to his familiarity with a buzz saw.

☞ The Indians in the vicinity of Oshkosh, Wis., are choppers of wood for a living this winter. An able-bodied savage manages to spoil a four dollar axe and cut fifty cents worth of wood a day.

☞ The Prince Imperial is enjoying himself by opening thirty letters per day which promise to assassinate him as soon as possible.

☞ A punctual Minnesota maiden lately married a casual acquaintance who happened to meet her in the church, rather than be kept waiting for her original intended, who was a quarter of an hour behind the appointed time.

☞ A Louisville lass has set the fashion of sliding down hill in a tin pan, and now no housewife in that region can find her dish-pan when she wants it.

☞ A New Jersey factory works apples up into peach, strawberry, currant and pineapple jelly, according to order.

☞ Tearful eyes are considered to be a beauty in girls of a gushing kind. In view of this a chemist, who deals in cosmetics, has invented an application which produces the desired tender effect far better than onions can, and without their disagreeable odor.

☞ The young ladies of Buffalo invite young gentlemen callers to leave their autographs and the date of their visit in a small book kept for the purpose. This book is posted once a month, and a young man who has failed to record his name in that time, is dropped from the lady's acquaintance.

☞ A writer in a European journal claims that pure water contains myriads of the germs of disease, visible only to the microscope. He says alcoholic liquor will kill these germs. There is no doubt of it, unless the germs are iron-plated, which it is not likely they are.

☞ A North Carolina lawyer succeeded in making an impression on a jury with a three-tined pitchfork.

☞ Newburg looks askance at a man and wife, both with a fearful obliquity of vision, with three virgin daughters, who also have convergin' eyes. They are locally alluded to as the cross squintette.—*World.*

☞ Washington, which has perhaps harbored some of the greatest thieves of the age—we say very guardedly, *perhaps*—has produced, we think, the very smallest and meanest of the light-fingered brood of whom we ever heard. He stole a dollar which was contributed toward the funeral expenses of a man who had committed suicide. "What a piece of work is man," etc.—*N. Y. Mail.*

☞ A phantom mule, ridden by a spectral miner who carries a half-dozen pickaxes swung about him, has greatly terrified the workmen of Muldraugh Hill Tunnel, in Taylor county, Ky.

☞ St. Paul policemen excite the envy of lesser official luminaries by blowing on solid gold-whistles.

☞ A Michigan husband left a note bequeathing to his wife the rope with which he hung himself. Not being one of the sentimental kind, she uses it for a clothes-line.

☞ An English naturalist experiments on the nerves of the members of the post-office department by requesting vipers, etc., sent by mail.

☞ The prisoner who had not seen the sun for thirty years, said it was the sun's fault in not dropping in. The sun had been out every day, but the prisoner hadn't.

☞ An exchange says: "The jurors at court in Clarion come in with loaded guns, and sit with them in their hands during a trial. Death to the first lawyer who tells a lie. Result—no court."

☞ Both houses of the Legislature of Virginia, have now passed a bill which exempts an uncle's widow and a nephew's widow from the provision of law which has heretofore existed prohibiting marriage between certain degrees of relationship.

☞ Somebody writes to a Birmingham newspaper on brain-producing diet. He says that Gerald Massey believes in fish and oatmeal as brain food. He has a fish dinner at least once a week, and oatmeal porridge every day to support his intellectual powers. The New York Mail says the wonder is what Gerald's intellectual power would be reduced to, if he left off this diet!

☞ The stature of the Emperor and Princes of Germany is as follows: The height of the Emperor is 5 feet 10 inches 3 lines; that of the Prince Imperial, 5 feet 11 inches; that of Prince Charles, 5 feet 9 inches; that of Prince Frederick Charles, 5 feet and 7 inches 1 line; that of Prince Albrecht, Jr., 6 feet 4 inches. The late Prince Albrecht was 6 feet 11 inches tall. Bismarck is 5 feet 11 inches.

☞ A Kentucky bride ran a race with her father, who was opposed to her marriage, and succeeded in reaching a carriage in which the bridegroom was waiting before the old gentleman caught up.

☞ Among the saddest episodes in the late storm in Minnesota, according to a Western paper, was the freezing of the hands, nose, forehead, everything except the cheek, of a life assurance agent.

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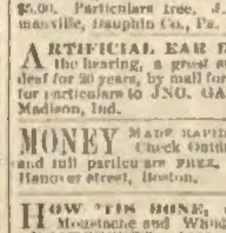

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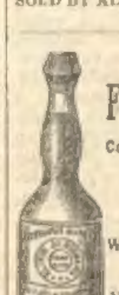

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THE
SATURDAY EVENING POST.

PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, MARCH 15, 1873.

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Single copy, $3.00 a year, payable in advance, not including postage, which is twenty cents a year, and payable at the office where the paper is received. Every single ($3.00) subscriber will be entitled to a copy of our Premium Chromo, "LITTLE SAMUEL," or to either of our large and beautiful Premium Steel Engravings—"The Sisters," "The Song of Home at Sea," or "Washington at Mount Vernon." [Ten cents must always be remitted to pay the expense of mailing the Chromo or Engraving.]

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If you wish to get up a club for THE POST, send us your name, and we will forward you, *free of charge*, a number of specimen copies of the paper, so that, with them, you can give your neighborhood a good canvassing.

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We have purchased a number of the well-known Chromo called

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designed to illustrate Whittier's celebrated poem of that name, beginning—

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And thy merry whistled tunes."

This Chromo is very fairly executed, and is ten by thirteen inches in size.

We will send it to any of our subscribers who is entitled to a premium and who may prefer it to waiting for "Little Samuel."

A BLUNDER.

On the second page of THE POST last week, a sad blunder occurred. About a column of the story, "The Cost of Conquest," was transposed, making confusion in the regular progress of the narrative.

The portion beginning (about the middle of the second column) with the paragraph—"Philip Reynell walked up to where the man was sitting," and ending (on the third column) with the line, "the unseen hand of him they worshipped," should have been commenced on the first column before the line, "over the grave of Pharaoh's mighty host," and inserted in the story at that place.

Of course this is the kind of a blunder for which, in a well regulated printing office, there can be no excuse whatever—and therefore we shall not attempt to offer any. We are deeply mortified that it should have occurred.

LETTERS FROM ZIG.

A BURDEN.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

What a mercy and a blessing and a comfort it would be, if one could just take a piece of goods, saw it up like a meal-bag, cut a hole in the top big enough to poke one's head through, run a string around the hole, so as to pucker it up a little about the neck, cut holes for the arms to go out, and put the meal-bag on and wear it, and thus solve the whole intricate problem of wherewithal shall we be clothed! I say what a mercy and a blessing and a comfort it would be if we could all just put on our meal-bags and go about our business, regardless of consequences.

A meal-bag with holes in it, and modified to suit seasons and weathers, is my ideal dress of the civilization of the future. Look ridiculous! Don't tell me that. After meekly enduring the modern fashionable dress of the period, I should say that human nature could stand most anything. After swallowing humps, hoops, bustles, double heads, infinitessimal bonnets, sharp-pointed heels four inches high, nasty trains fourteen feet long, barbarian ear-rings and heathen corsets, saying nothing of six pounds of false hair, I would take it as a favor if you would mention anything which human nature can't swallow. I leave it to every enlightened understanding in the land, whether a woman in a meal-bag would look a whit more ridiculous than a woman with a ponderous hump on her back. Whether a plain, gracefully flowing meal-bag isn't fully as lovely and artistic as an attire which, from top to bottom, is a simple mass of puckers.

The meal-bag fashion would release womankind from at least half their earthly troubles. Yesterday I read in a paper where a prominent clergyman stated it for a fact that the reason people of the middle class never went to church any more, was because they were totally unable to dress their wives and daughters in the expensive style at present demanded by the dictates of fashion. Isn't it dreadful to think about? And I've no doubt it's so. I confess on my own hook that many a time in my life I'd have gone to church when I didn't go, if I'd only had a new dress and bonnet. What she shall put upon her back has worried many a poor woman into her grave. I've said it before, and I'll say it again—many a poor woman has died of ruffles. I used to know a family of girls who absolutely nearly starved themselves to death, in order to cover their backs with the fashionable attire. I knew them well for fifteen years, and in all that period, nobody outside of their own starved selves ever ate with this family, except on one single occasion. Once two merry girls determined they would take tea with this fashionable family in spite of themselves, so they went in the afternoon, resolutely prepared to sit it out at all hazards. The young ladies of the family were very nicely dressed, and received their friends in a most stylish, elegant manner. At tea-time one of the young ladies stepped out of the parlor. Our two friends waited patiently for a summons to the dining-room, but lo! none came. They waited still, hungry and expectant, but yet no summons to tea. Presently, the nicely dressed young lady who had disappeared came back again. Then her sister dodged out quietly, as the first one had done, and the one who came in said with her sweetest voice and silveriest smile—

"Girls, it's too lovely to stay in the house this evening. Do let's go and take a little walk!"

And they did, and bless the bite of supper the two friends got, till they went home. At the same time the fashionable sisters had eaten dinner, breakfast and tea, at the homes of their two friends dozens of times. I can't tell you how contemptible that family seemed, according to the notions of our Western country hospitality. They dressed more expensively and fashionably than any of the other girls, but they hadn't a real, warm, jolly friend in the world, and I don't think they have to this day—although they are married women now, and well-to-do—all through their abominable, silly, selfish vanity. I'd rather have a good dinner and a good friend to help me eat it, than a velvet cloak.

So I say, Heaven send the meal-bag fashion! The aborigines wore meal-bags, or something like 'em, when they wore anything, and it is a settled principle that the nearer the perfection of civilization approaches the simplicity of nature, just that much nearer we reach the final goal of all civilization. Only to think of nevermore being tormented with an overskirt! Of being nevermore bedevilled with ruffles and box-fluting, or Saratoga trunks! Of no longer having to drag after you through this weary world a dead, discouraging weight of dry-goods, as heavy as you are! And I'm sure it would be as nice as the millennium itself, just to slip into a lovely, loose meal-bag, instead of worrying and losing your time and temper as at present, trying to get into a dress consisting of about forty pieces all put on a different way. We could actually dress without a looking-glass then. Nay more, a woman could even dress as quickly as a man. Blissful thought! I'd give half my earthly fortune to be able to dress as rapidly as a man. A gentleman told me not long since that his wife always had to rise three-quarters of an hour earlier than he did in the morning, just to be dressed for breakfast and ready as soon as he was. Oh, the everlasting tyranny of the toggery of a woman's dry-goods! There would be nothing in this life so intensely aggravating as to have to get up in the cold these mornings three-quarters of an hour ahead of a man, and leave him snoring comfortably in bed, while you were obliged to spend that whole three-quarters of an hour putting your clothes on. I hope to goodness the dress of the future will be a meal-bag.

ZIG.

A MEMORY.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,
BY GLEN CAROL.

Is this the spot where we used to play,
Ella and I, in the long ago?
How still the old place seems to-day!
And all too palely the roses blow.

Ruby and gold the sunlight shone,
Leaving its kisses upon her brow;
Sweet with perfume each tinted bud
Dropped from the swaying apple-bough.

Green waved the grass in the scented nooks,
Where side by side through the summer's day
We played at life's dull, distant cares,
And laughed the fairy hours away.

Oh! wind, so heavy with summer's sweets,
Blow her a thought, a dream of me!
Tell her I keep the tryst of old,
'Neath the leafy boughs of the apple-tree!

A LETTER TO MY HUSBAND.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

DEAR POST—Will you be so kind as to permit me to address a letter, to my "lord and master," through your columns? Where is my husband? you ask. Why, he's at home, of course! Where else should he be?

But let me tell you how it is! In a whisper of course; for I would not like all the world to hear it you know!

You see my husband is one of the *dearest, best* men in the world; but he's always so busy. He want's to take a "nap" in the morning while I get breakfast. Then he sits down and eats before I have poured the coffee out or buttered a biscuit.

Then he is off to his work. If he comes to dinner five minutes before it is ready, he takes a paper; and if I think of something special I want to tell him, and am not too busy to go in and speak to him, I speak two or three times and then he looks up inquiringly, and waits a moment to hear what I was going to say. Perhaps, I think to myself, he looks a little cross, or as though I was *bothering* him. So I turn back to my work, and he to his reading. Dinner is hurried over, as was breakfast, and he is gone again.

Tea is eaten in the same hurry. Then "up town" generally before I leave the table. You know it is *my place* to wait on the children. If there is nothing interesting going on, he may come back a little while before bed-time, and take up the paper again. If I ask why he does not read aloud, he quietly supposes I had read all there was in the paper.

About Saturday, here comes The Post. Sunday morning he takes his seat behind it and reads the greater part of the day. He does not know that every hour of my time is filled all the week, with the house-work and care of the children! How should he know that? He is seldom here—and if he was, he would not know what *I* was doing! He is a "model husband." He "never meddles with *his* wife's affairs." He never thinks she would like to have the paper—or hear him read—on Sunday.

Thus the weeks go by! The same round almost. A holiday is spent up town, or in reading the paper.

And now do you wonder I come to you with a letter for my husband? Why I have a thousand things to tell him! more than forty letters would contain. But if you will allow me a few lines in the Post, *I know he will read it there*. If I were to write and give it to him, he could not take time to read it. (You think he *could* not; well perhaps that *is it*.) But he will read the Post, and thus I will secure his attention. But here I have written a long letter to you Mr. Post, and not one word of what I intended.

However, a few words to him will suffice for this time; and with your permission, I will write to him again when I have something "special;" for if he frowns at me over your shoulders, it will not hurt so badly.

My Dear Husband—I am sorry to interrupt you; but I am under the necessity of informing you, that—"The flour is out?" No—"The sugar?"—No; not that. I mean I want a new pair of shoes! There now! That is it. Please,—I will not ask for another thing for—a week. Now that's a dear! Shall I *have* them?

Your devoted MATTIE.

LETTER FROM NEW YORK.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

DEAR POST.—In sitting down this bright, beautiful, *beautiful* morning (I want to make it as emphatic as possible as we had a snow-storm yesterday, and will, doubtless, have another to-morrow,) to this my weekly chat with you, my first thought is that we will have a long confidential conversation upon the hundreds of live topics that are now interesting the people here and there all over the city. But my second thought checks the wild impulse, and scatters it to the winds, as I remember that such a dear saintly proper old Post would never sit quietly listening to a resumé of the doings in "ye wicked city of New York."

So not a word of the shooting and stabbing affrays, of the murders and murder trials of which everybody and his wife are talking. There are wild tales told of the causes that led to many of these crimes, and alas! in almost every instance the traditional woman was at the bottom of it. It seems a pity that a few of the gentler sex should be so pretty and so artless, and so bewildering and so naughty and so nice and so every way desirable, as to make the whole world mad. The whole of *their* little particular world—and it seems so strange too that all the mischief is done by some marvellously proper *married* lady. We very seldom hear of any great public pow-wow growing out of the acts of any blushing maiden, but every now and then it crops out that Mrs. A. B. or C. has had to appear as a witness somewhere, and only for her there would have been no trial and no trouble, that it was her pretty face and sweet smiles that led poor—to whisper compliments, which coming to the ear of my lady's husband roused the demon of jealousy, and without a thought of the consequences the fatal shot was fired—and—well! the man was crazy, that was all.

And then too we have mysteries here—the most mysterious mysteries. We never get any clue by which we may guess at the solution of them either. Like "the mystery of Edwin Drood" we never know what becomes of the hero. There was a gentleman banker over on the west side who failed to come home one evening about a month ago. There was no apparent reason why he shouldn't come home, for his home was a brown-stone mansion elegantly furnished, and a furnace in the cellar that kept the whole house comfortable, even though it did consume a great deal of coal. And his wife stood behind the lace curtains watching for him, and the nurse girl with the baby all dressed up in its tucked embroidered robe and blue sash, was at her side watching also. And they kept on watching, and the dinner grew cold and the cook grew cross, and nine o'clock came, and still no husband and father put in an appearance.

I wouldn't like to be exact to a minute, but it was somewhere near twelve o'clock, I believe, when the alarm was given and messengers dispatched to find, living or dead, and bring home the body of the unfortunate man.

From this you will readily imagine there was a dreadful state of things in that elegant mansion. The young wife nearly distracted, wildly paced the parlors and wept, and wrung her hands and tore her hair out by the handfuls. Fortunately it was false and didn't do any permanent damage. The servants ran hither and thither like wild creatures, neglected their work, let the fire go out in the furnace, and talked with the policemen in the area of the dreadful thing that had befallen the house. Even the baby entering into the spirt of the thing, kicked and screamed and took soothing syrup, and a cold, and one or two vigorous slaps, before he could be induced to go to bed and behave himself.

But it was all of no use. The man did not come home, and he hasn't come yet, and what's more he doesn't intend to come, I presume.

At first, he had been murdered for his watch and bosom studs, sure. His accounts were examined, and no defalcation was discovered. Everything was straight.

It was found out though very soon, that moneys deposited in different banks had been withdrawn. And then there was a rumor of a tall lady, with brilliant black eyes and ebon hair, with whom he had been seen promenading, and it was ascertained that there had been a mysterious disappearance at her residence, and then everything was hushed up and died out of mind. And the deserted, or bereaved, or whatever you choose to call her, wife, tossed her head and called him a villain, and took up her baby and went to Connecticut, to live with her papa.

Now whatever became of that man nobody knows. His bones may be bleaching in the East river—or his flesh may be browning in Cuba. It's hard to say. But such things happen often, and I only mentioned this particular case because I was right there and knew all about it, and helped undress the baby.

CONCERNING FASHIONS.

March is our "opening" month, and doubtless all the new ideas our importers have been busy for the last three months collecting will be placed on exhibition, and the new styles will be perfected and brought out. In head-gear, we shall probably see nothing new worn until Easter Sunday. Not to have a new bonnet on that day augurs bad luck for a whole year.

In dress-goods, quantities of late importations are upon the counters, but, as yet, nothing bearing the stamp of novelty has attracted my attention.

The epidemic of embroidery that swept over the land a year or so ago, and then gradually subsided, bids fair to pay us another visit this season, and judging from the appearance of some of the dresses in the furnishing houses it will be in a still more exaggerated form. This embroidery is all done by hand, and so intricate are the patterns and so great the amount of labor expended, that it is a miracle that they should be within the reach of every one. But from the number one saw a year or more ago, it would seem that "every lady in the land" had one or more at her disposal. It is, however, quite fashionable just now for ladies to do "fancy work," and first and foremost in this line comes braiding and embroidery, and instead of expending the time and talent required, on useless cushions and toilet mats, a lady can to a certain extent assist in the making up of her wardrobe by employing her dainty fingers in embroidering the material after it is cut and fitted. Sometimes six months is required to complete the work, but when done it is beautiful. Of course these are exceptions, but I mean when the embroidery consists of dainty ferns, and trailing foliage and drooping berries half-hidden in rich leaves and grasses. To see any very astonishing amount of beauty in birds of Paradise thrown on here and there, or a pheasant or peacock roosting complacently on the shoulder with all his gorgeous plumage floating down the back, or a procession of butterflies, or a swarm of bumble-bees scattered over the entire dress, would be an effort for which I for one am incapable.

The pretty white Cashmere jackets which are now taking the lead for evening wear are exceedingly tasteful. They are usually bordered with white quilted silk headed by some kind of fluffy trimming. Some of them are embroidered in natural colors in chaste and elegant designs.

The fashion of protecting the long skirts with box-pleated wigging firmly sewn on the inside of the facing is a very good one. This pleating is now for sale in all fancy stores, and is in much demand.

The pockets now worn by ladies are said to be the most convenient style ever invented. They are known as chatelaine pockets, and are merely a long three, or five, sided bag, long and pointed, with a tassel at the bottom; it is attached to the belt by two bias straps. The pockets are made of the same material as the dress, and correspondingly trimmed. Sometimes one is made of black velvet or silk, with fancy trimming of rose color or blue; this is pretty with black or white dress, with neck-tie and with hair ribbon matching the trimming of the pocket. Taking them altogether, though, they look to me like a great deal of pocket. They might answer for a housekeeper with a big bunch of keys, scissors, handkerchief, purse and account-book, but for ladies who have only to lounge of a morning, read the last new poem, and wonder why it is that dear LeRoy doesn't propose, they seem much more ornamental than useful.

OLIVE KING.

HOME.

When daily tasks are done, and tired hands
Lie still and folded on the resting knee,
When loving thoughts have leave to loose their bands,
And wander over past and future free;
When visions bright of love and hope fulfilled,
Bring weary eyes a spark of olden fire;
One castle fairer than the rest we build,
One blessing more than others we desire;
A home, our home, wherein all waiting past,
We two may stand together, and alone;
Our patient taskwork finished, and at last
Love's perfect blessedness and peace our own.
Some little nest of safety and delight,
Guarded by God's good angels day and night.

We cannot guess if this dear home shall lie
In some green spot embowered with arching trees,
Where bird-notes joined with brook-notes gliding by,
Shall make us music as we sit at ease;
Or if amid the city's busy din
Is built the nest for which we look and long,
No sound without shall mar the peace within,
The calm of love that time has proved so strong.
Or if, ah! solemn thought, this home of ours
Doth lie beyond the world's confusing noise;
And if the nest be built in Eden bowers,
What do we still, but silently rejoice?
We have a home, but of its happy state
We know not yet. We are content to wait.

HOME AND SOCIETY.

A Chapter on Guests.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

It has been well said that "Short visits make long friends," and like many other pithy proverbs it contains a great deal of truth, for there are few families who desire to have the privacy of their home-life revealed for any length of time to an uninterested looker-on; and although the visitor may be even an intimate friend, whose coming we gladly welcome, yet if the visit is prolonged into many weeks, it becomes a serious restraint upon the freedom of the family circle. We can admit a near relation to the privacy of our esoteric life, but friends hold a different position, and we desire them to see the outside more than the inside condition of our surroundings.

It is well when we invite guests, to specify a limit to the invitation, and this should never be exceeded by a visitor, and unless you especially request a continued stay, it is even better to shorten the visit than to lengthen it.

Guests should also be dumb, deaf and blind to anything relating to the private concerns of their hosts, and it is an absolute duty never to interfere with any household arrangement or disagreement.

It is not desired or expected that visitors should meddle with the discipline of the children of the family, or make any remarks upon the bad management of the parents, or the disagreeable behavior of the children. They are receiving favors at the hands of their hosts, and it is to be hoped that their presence is looked upon as an added pleasure to the family circle, therefore it is not their position to act as judge in any family discord, or in any thing of an unpleasant nature between the heads of the family, and if requested to act as umpire, the only way is to refuse laughingly, and endeavor to introduce harmony and union, where disunion and division of opinion reign.

If politeness were the rule, rather than the exception, in "polite society" no discord would be exhibited before guests; but alas! for our humanity, grievous breaches in good manners are daily witnessed in many families.

We all of us know of visitors who make hotels of their friends' houses—using them merely as places where they can eat, drink, sleep, lounge, read, and amuse themselves generally, without paying much attention to their entertainers; and some persons, really, seem to think that thus taking possession of a friend's house in the country, stamps them as "fashionables."

They have perhaps an ancient grandmother, aunt, uncle or cousin living in a cool, sequestered town or village, and their home seems a desirable exchange for the heated accommodations of a "five-story stone front" in the city. Perhaps they have a standing invitation to "come and see us," so they accept it, and if possessed of decent manners they either write or telegraph of their expected arrival, if not, they arrive unexpectedly, and lucky it is for them if they do not find the house closed and their relations absent on a visit.

It is also the height of ill-breeding to notice the most trifling defects in your friend's *ménage* or house. Appreciative and kindly comments upon the pleasant surroundings of the house, the arrangement of the parlors, the pretty appointments of the chambers, are all in good taste, if perfectly sincere; but if false, the base metal will be quickly detected.

If there is but one servant in the house, it is very desirable that the visitor should keep her own room as tidy as possible, and any little aid, that is readily accepted, will usually be of service; but often visitors are more a hindrance than assistance in the household affairs. Yet if they cannot lighten the cares of their hostess, they need not add to them by never being ready for breakfast, or absent at lunch or dinner, and thus retarding the execution of all the work of the house.

If several servants are employed, it is the duty of the guest to keep out of their way as much as possible, taking care to leave the dining-room when they are at work in it; to vacate the parlor when they desire to renovate it; and to leave one's own room when the chambermaid is ready to set it in order. It is also most ill-bred to ask them questions as to their wages, &c., and whether they are contented with their situation or not. Such interference on the part of a guest is the height of impudence, and such visitors should be *tabooed* from polite society.

It should be the pleasure of a guest to add to the happiness of the family circle. If music is one's *forte*, ready hands should always be willing to discourse sweet sounds and to sing without urging.

Then if there are children, those who possess a gift for "story-telling" should be willing to exercise it for their benefit; and if not thus endowed, should at least do their part toward entertaining them in some way, for if you do not make yourselves agreeable to the "little folks," you may rest assured that you will not long be desired as a visitor to the larger folks.

If callers enter, it is a visitor's place to try to entertain them and to take part in the conversation, yet not to monopolize it too much, for when conversation degenerates into monologue, you may be sure that your hearers are bored.

In short, guests should be desirous of making their visits as attractive as possible, and should gladly employ all the talents they possess to make the days and weeks pass pleasantly to their entertainers, for their position is not one of passive recipiency, but one in which favors must be given as well as received; and guests that depart and retail the family secrets and gossip from the desire to tell a good story and be entertaining to others, are worse than the meanest Arab, who once having partaken of your salt, deems your confidence inviolate, and would on no account betray it; while fashionable people in our midst, perhaps without any deliberate intention of playing a false part, often relate anecdotes, etc., concerning those from whom they have received most kindly attentions.

"Essential honor must be in a friend,
Not such as every breath fans to and fro;
But born within, in its own judge and end,
And dares not sin, though sure that none should know,
Where friendship's spoke, honesty's understood;
For none can be a friend that is not good."

DAISY EYEBRIGHT.

MY PETS.

(Continued from a Former Article.)

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

A friend once presented to a young man of our family a small pup of the Mexican breed. It was young and very little, with no hair upon its body. A few long hairs were on the end of its rat-like tail, and some half dozen shorter hairs upon the top of its head. His master named him "Poco," which I am told means "little devil" in Spanish. Well did the name become him, for he was the most impish looking creature one could imagine of the dog kind. His thin face was wrinkled like a monkey's, his color that of an unpolished stove-pipe. I have seen a few hairless Mexican dogs, but none so small as this. It might have been stunted in some way, at any rate it never became larger than a common sized cat. It was in the fall of the year when Poco came to us; and, of course, the poor naked brute felt the cold and was always trembling. His master could not take him out with him, and so he was left to my care. The diverting, impish tricks that dog would perform of his own accord it was fun to witness. But when tired with play he liked to be nursed, as his cushion never seemed to be warm enough for his comfort. He would stand up against any lady who chanced to be sitting in the room, wrinkle his skinny little monkey face, and whine, his small, bead-like eyes pleading all the while. My sewing girl used to say to him, as he thus begged to be taken up, "Yes, Poco, I would willingly hold you in my lap, but I can't bear to touch you." So she would throw her handkerchief over him and lift him up. His skin felt like a brick or a beard of a day's growth, and rather unpleasant to the hands of a lady. Once snuggled down, he slept peacefully, but let the holder attempt to move him after he was settled, and Poco gave credit to his name by biting savagely. The ladies of the family were all very well so long as he was left to us alone. But let his young master come in, and he would have nothing more to do with us. He would snarl, bite, and try to drive us from the room. Of course this dog was a great curiosity, and many came to see him. Very few admired him, but all owned he was an oddity.

It was his ugliness that I admired most, for like the wiry Scotch terrier, his homeliness was his only "beauty."

As Poco's master didn't come in at the usual hour for retiring, we would wrap the dog in a warm shawl and place him in his master's bed when we retired to our rooms. Often his first nap would be ended about the time his master came up to bed, and then Poco had his revenge, for he would sit scowling as his master undressed, when finding feet and legs uncovered, he would spring at them, biting, jumping from one unprotected part to another, and have his play out before he gave up to go to sleep. Such an uproar as there would be in that room! and Poco usually tired out his master.

One night Poco continued his play so long that his master fell asleep and left him barking, snarling and fighting. He must have fallen or jumped off the bed, and it was a cold night.

In the morning poor Poco was brought down to me by his master, stiff and apparently frozen. We feared he was dead; but I heated some brandy, rubbed the poor dog, and forced a portion down his throat. If I tried to tell how that dog looked when he opened his eyes, I should fail. Such an imp never appeared to a man afflicted with delirium tremens, with his bead eyes, frowning face, half-open mouth, and a wish to bite all who came near him. Suffice it to say, Poco recovered from his frozen state, and his nurses were cold long after he was warm and snug in his bed.

Of course the poor little harmless creature could not walk out with his master without a blanket over him, and even then he shivered. We longed for the summer days to come, that he might enjoy life, but alas! the long winter was too much for our Southern dog. Early in the spring time he began to droop, and to cease his funny capers at which we were all so much amused, and before May had come he died, and greatly we mourned for the poor little Poco, who had amused us all that long cold winter. We have seen no dog like him since, and we do not expect ever to look upon his like again.

As has been mentioned in a former article we never were without pets, and dogs being especial favorites, the next I shall name will be "Echo," the grand. Echo was of the large poodle kind, the most knowing, the easiest trained. I never was good at training dogs; what they learned was owing to their own ambition, not mine. Echo was white and cream color, his noble head covered with little light rings of curls, his tail long, lying upon his broad back and ending in a brush like a lion's. He was the proudest dog I ever knew, too dignified to fight, unless some large dog came at him. He was a beauty of his kind; we have his ambrotype yet, where he sits at the side of his mistress, ready to bite the artist should he attempt to injure us. I only wish his picture could go with this little sketch of him, that you might see his "fair proportions." He loved the whole family, and would fight for them, if needful, but to one little girl he was most attached. If this child was ill, Echo took his station on her bed, near her pillow, and no one was allowed to disturb the child. If any physician was called in to see his little mistress, except the family doctor, it took much coaxing to get him from the bed, for if the child groaned Echo would surely bite whoever might seem to annoy her.

Living, as we then did, in a new Western town, snakes were rather abundant in yards and gardens. Echo had often seen snakes, and never appeared to notice the reptiles.

One time when his young mistress was lying ill—her bed was in a room the door of which opened out into a back porch.

One morning I passed out at this door, leaving it open; and Echo, as usual, sitting near the pillow of his young mistress. When I returned to this room, what was my horror to see a snake, of unusual shape and color, just crawling under the bed!

I gave a scream, awakening the child at once—and Echo sprang from the bed, seized the snake by its middle, ran out to the porch and shook it rapidly for a moment, its horrid head with distended tongue imbedded in the curls on the dog's neck, while I called for help. Two men came in, but by this time the snake was lying on the porch helpless, and Echo was on the bed with his young charge, licking her hands and face, as if congratulating her on her escape from danger.

The men who examined the snake, said it was a viper, of the most venomous kind, and its back was broken by the dog. Never did dog show more pride over the downfall of an enemy, than did Echo over this reptile. It had come in from the long grass in the yard, and crawled in at the open door. My screams had notified Echo that something was wrong, and he did his part well. During that whole day, and for days after, Echo was more than usually attentive to his little mistress, not allowing any one to touch her, unless she was perfectly willing.

Poor, faithful Echo! It does seem too sad to think, that after long years of faithful attendance on this little girl, in her defence he at last met his death. A neighbor's dog went mad, and came past our gate where Echo and the child, with other children, were playing. The mad dog growled, Echo stood between him and the children, and was bitten!

Poor fellow! He was not allowed to go mad, as others did from the bite of this same dog; but it was hard indeed for his master to have him killed. He licked our hands at parting, and his large, brown eyes seemed to ask why we all looked so sorrowful as he was coaxed away to his doom. His body was brought home after nightfall, placed in a neat box, and was buried in our dog cemetery.

I have told but few of the many services he performed for his friends, but his name will not soon be forgotten by those who knew him well.

AUNT ALICE.

THE BETROTHAL RING.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,
BY T. J. CHAMBERS.

'Tis but a common little ring,
A slender band of gold,
And yet what memories round it cling
Of happy days of old.

A slender girl with longing eyes,
And cheeks with love aflame,
I sought beneath the sunset skies
The place where Philip came

To keep his nightly tryst with me
Beneath the bending trees—
Where whippoorwills made melody,
Where sighed the southern breeze.

My Philip seemed a monarch crowned,
Yet tender were his words;
His voice was deep as trumpet's sound,
And soft as song of birds.

He placed the ring upon my hand,
And said, "My sweet, my life,
When I come back from India's land
My love shall be my wife."

He kissed my cheek, he kissed my mouth,
He clasped me to his breast—
The young moon faded in the South,
The twilight from the West.

Yet still we walked beneath the trees,
Whispering sweet vows of love,
And listened to the sighing seas,
Or watched the stars above.

But Philip sailed for distant lands;
His ship came back no more—
And now I think he waiting stands
Upon the Heavenly shore.

YOUNG MARRIED COUPLES.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

DEAR POST: Once upon a time I spent the evening with a friend, and met there, with a dozen or so others, two young married couples.

One couple was Mr. and Mrs. Smith, the other Mr. and Mrs. Darton.

Mr. Smith and his wife were so much in love with each other that the rest of us were scarcely noticed by either of them. Mr. Smith devoted himself to his wife; 'twas "my dear" this, and "my dear" that; or "my darling" do you think so and so? and Mrs. Smith thought no one was present but "dear John;" sometimes it was "honey," "precious," or "*shoog*"—(that means sugar, if you please), and once they kissed. Now did you ever know of anything like it? I suppose she must have said something *awful* sweet; we saw his head "bob," then a "bump," then "smack" they both went; we laughed, but I felt like boxing them both. Now just as sure as your name is Mr. Post, and mine Daisy Burns, things are different behind the scenes; being at home and abroad, makes just lots of difference.

Mr. and Mrs. Darton were very agreeable. He noticed the rest of us ladies equally as much as his wife, yet paid her due respect at the same time, and she had a word now and then for other gentlemen present. We didn't hear a "my dear" or "honey" from either of them the whole evening, but once when they were alone on the porch—not alone either, for I was there but they didn't know that—I saw him take her little face between his hands and kiss her tenderly and—well it made me feel good, for I knew he meant it.

Not many days afterward Mr. Smith walked in at home.

"Liza," he said to Mrs. Smith, who reclined on the lounge with a late novel, "confound the luck, come here and give me a clean shirt, I'm in a hurry."

"Oh, John," said the affectionate wife, "I'm not going to get up; get it yourself."

"Oh, come on, put down your old book, and"—

"I tell you I'll not do it."

"Well you can let it alone," so John slammed the door and walked off with his soiled shirt.

"Oh, Charlie," said Mrs. Darton, throwing down a book, "I'm so glad you've come. I've been anticipating a lonesome evening—and now you will stay and keep me company, won't you—you dear good husband."

"Yes, I'm home for the night," said the newly arrived husband, throwing himself in a large rocking-chair and drawing his wife into his arms, "and we'll have a pleasant evening all to ourselves."

And that's just the way.

Now, young married folks, please take a little friendly advice: when you are alone, eat one another up if you want to, who cares; but don't go calling each other "honey," "*shoog*" and like names in company; for indeed such is worse than one's first sea voyage, to a disinterested party.

DAISY BURNS.

☞ Nimrod—"Have you seen a deer pass this way, boy? You know what a deer is like?" Yokel—"Noa, I doan't." Nimrod—"Why, something like a donkey with short ears. Have you seen anything answering to that description?" Yokel—"Noa, not till *yeou* come by."—*Punch.*

RETROSPECTION.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY BRUCE TOWNSEND.

Looking backward, I behold
Secret stories, yet untold,
Long I look, yet all in vain,
For the soft and sweet refrain,
Which, in years long since gone by,
Filled my heart so joyously.
Looking backward for the glory
Which, in manhood's prime, was mine;
For the thrilling, burning story
That I told in words divine.
Looking, longing for the blisses,
Which I found so long ago,
When the hot and passionate kisses
Left my cheek with fire aglow.
Looking down the pathway narrow,
Of my hard and struggling life,
Seeing, 'mid the sandy desert,
Fertile spots with pleasure rife.

Looking o'er with grief and sorrow
At the graves of friends of yore?
Thinking not, perchance the morrow
May increase them—one grave more.
Looking backward thro' the sunshine,
Shining here and there so bright;
Gazing on the gloomy shadows—
Filling spaces dark as night.
Looking backward, *ever* backward;
Ah, how vain is human pride!
Looking, longing, vain regretting,
With a soul unsatisfied.

MURPHY'S MASTER.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "LOST SIR MASSINGBERD."

CHAPTER XI.

PROMOTION.

Toward morning, and when the sounds of disorder from beneath had at last ceased, Robert was about to retire to his berth, when suddenly he heard a cry of "Help, help!" from the direction of the captain's cabin. Apprehensive, he scarcely knew of what, he rushed toward it, when on his way he was arrested by a repetition of the cry, not from where he had expected, but from the cabin occupied by his patron. It was uttered in muffled, half-suffocated tones; and finding the door locked, Robert flung himself without a moment's hesitation against it, and forced it open. Mr. Kavanagh was alone, sitting up in his berth, with the skull-cap on that he now wore night and day, and pointing with shaking finger to some object—an imaginary one, as it turned out—in the centre of the cabin. The moonlight which streamed in on him at the little window showed his staring eyes, his trembling lips, his features palsied as if with excess of terror. "Help, help!" he continued to cry in a hoarse whisper. "Keep him off! keep him off! I say. He struck me first; I swear it."

"Who struck you, Mr. Kavanagh? There is no one here," said Robert soothingly.

"There *is*, there *is*—there, there, with his strangled face!" and the bare stretched-out arm pointed quiveringly where nothing was to be seen. "Help, Murphy, help!"

"I am here, master," answered Murphy from without. Then pushing hurriedly in, and seeing Robert, he whispered huskily: "Be off, lad; you are not wanted here."

Robert heard him, but took no notice: he had, he deemed, as much right to be where he was as Murphy had; nay, more, for it was clear enough that the latter was much intoxicated, and therefore unfit to be of service to his master; and, moreover, the insolence of the man's tone was such as might well excite antagonism.

"Do you hear, you fool?" continued Murphy savagely. "You are not wanted here."

"Yes, yes; take him away," muttered Kavanagh, huddling himself in the bed-clothes. "His mouth is bleeding. There, there!"

It was clear to any person who had the use of his senses that these words could have reference to no visible being; but no sooner were they uttered, than, as if taking them as a positive command, Murphy threw himself on Robert with the fury of a wild beast, and dragged him to the door. The suddenness of the attack for the moment overcame the lad; but he soon recovered himself, and grappled with his assailant, not without effect. Had they both been on equal terms, indeed, the conflict would not long have been doubtful, but Murphy, being far gone in liquor, lost his footing, and fell on the cabin floor, with Robert above him. There they writhed and struggled, till presently Maguire appeared, half-dressed, and far from sober-looking, at the open door.

"What is it, Dick?" inquired he. "Is it money you're wrastling for?"

"Put him out!" roared Murphy—"put him out!"

"Nay, it's an eviction, is it? Then you may just put him out yourself, for it's contrary to my principles to lend a hand to it."

"The master don't want him here," gasped Murphy, for Robert's hand had fastened on his neckerchief to some purpose. "He's got the fit on him."

"Oh, that's another thing," replied Maguire gravely. "I am the last man to interfere with an honest rough-and-tumble, Master Chesney, but this exhibition must positively close." He stooped down over the combatants, and seizing Robert, who was still uppermost, by the neck, compelled him, on pain of suffocation, to let go his hold; then swung him outside the cabin-door, as easily as though he had been a cat, and closed it. Like a cat, Robert alighted on his feet, and sprang at the door, though a moment's reflection must have convinced him that it would be madness to attempt to push his way against two such antagonists; he had forced the lock in the first instance, but the opposition he now encountered was far stronger than that of bolt or bar.

A chuckling sound from within proclaimed the sense of superiority enjoyed by at least one of the besieged, and convinced him of the uselessness of his efforts. Furious and baffled, he retired to his own cabin, not to sleep, but to reflect on the humiliation he had so unjustly suffered. He was no tale-bearer, but he was thoroughly resolved to lay the whole matter before Mr. Kavanagh, and if not righted by him, to withdraw from a service degraded by such companionship as Murphy's. In the New World, a man might make his own way without a patron. Still he could not forget that he was under great obligations to Kavanagh, nor forbear to pity his present condition. A city lad, in the same position in life, would probably have been at no loss for the right name for the attack to which he had been so lately a witness, but to Robert it seemed some uncommon disorder—perhaps an epileptic fit.

Days went by, and on the morning of each, Robert presented himself at Kavanagh's cabin, only to be refused admittance in Murphy's dogged tones; but this, and a certain offensive grin with which Maguire now greeted him, only made him more intent upon his purpose. On the sixth morning, he was admitted. He found Mr. Kavanagh looking very ill and pale, which touched him; and when he held out his wasted hand for him to take, and welcomed him even more kindly than usual, his wrongs somehow lost their proportions, and became at most a grievance.

"So I hear you have been to ask after me every morning, Robert?"

"Yes, indeed, sir; but Murphy denied me admittance. He said I was not wanted."

"Well, well, he is gone now, and you are here," urged Kavanagh smiling. "He's a rough fellow, and, I know, resents another's showing me any regard, which is very unreasonable."

"Nay, sir, I find no fault with him on that account; but when you were taken ill the other night, and cried 'Help! help!'"

A sudden spasm shot across the sick man's face. "Something ails you, sir," said Robert, hastily. "It was very selfish of me to be making complaints at such a time; forgive me."

"No, no; I am better now;" gasped Kavanagh. "I would rather hear all about it. I cried 'Help! help!' you say?"

"Yes, sir; and then I ran in, and found you sitting up in bed, and pointing to I know not what."

"Well, well, and what did I say more?" inquired the sick man, nervously.

"Nothing more, sir, that was any sense. But while you wandered on, in Murphy came, and bade me leave the cabin, since you did not want me. It might have been so, but it seemed to me you did want 'help' of some sort: and since he was drunk and I was sober, that I was the better fitted to give it. Then he threw himself upon me, and strove to turn me out by force. I left my mark upon his throat, I reckon." Here Robert paused, stopped this time by an ejaculation from the other of pain and horror.

"What wickedness!" he murmured; "you might have strangled him!"

"Indeed, sir, he might have strangled *me*," answered Robert, indignant at what seemed to him an expression of gross favoritism. "If the big, drunken brute had kept his feet, he *would* have done it. I do not show my own regard for you by flying like a bull-dog at the faces of your friends, but I strive to serve you, sir, as best I can—"

"You do, you *do*," interrupted Kavanagh. "It is an ill return to be treated thus indeed. It shall not happen again; I will speak to Murphy." Robert smiled incredulously. "Ah, you think speaking of no use? Well, we shall see; tell Murphy to come hither at once."

"Indeed, sir, there is no need to trouble yourself about the matter so immediately," urged Robert; "when you get well and strong—"

"I said *at once*," reiterated Kavanagh; "did you not hear me?"

Robert opened the cabin door, and there stood Murphy in close attendance.

"Mr. Kavanagh wants you."

Without bestowing a glance at the speaker, Murphy made one stride to his master's pillow, and there stood, obedient as the dog that hears the shepherd's voice, and springing to his side awaits his signal.

"I wish to speak to you, Dick, about our good friend, Robert, here. We not in England now, begirt by spies, and hunted by the blood-hounds of the law; and when we were, remember, though you doubted him, this lad proved true as steel. There is no danger in his being one of us, in short, and if there were, I still would wish it. Don't speak"—his voice became imperative, and even harsh—"my mind is fixed upon it, and immovable. What you and I lack we have found in this good lad. He can use his wits and fingers too, and in the days to come will be more useful to us even than he has been. At present, he has no authority, and you (he tells me) take advantage of it to treat him as you dare not treat one of those whom I have placed under his charge. This must not be. In future, look on him as my lieutenant, my second in command, whom, in my absence, you will obey as though he were myself. And if I die—"

"The saints forbid!" ejaculated Murphy, piously.

"Still it may happen, Dick," continued Kavanagh, kindly, "and then what would become of these poor fellows, without a head? I say, if I should die, this man, so far as I can make him so—and with *you* at least I *can*—is my successor. Do you hear?"

The expression of Mr. Richard Murphy's countenance was curious to witness. Rage, dislike, humiliation, were struggling within him against a habit of obedience to his master's wishes that was second nature; he looked from Chesney to Kavanagh, from Kavanagh to Chesney, in such pitiable perplexity, that the latter, who had a generous spirit, was moved by it.

"Indeed, Mr. Kavanagh," said he, "I have no wish to exercise authority over Murphy, but merely to be made secure from any such outrage as he put upon me the other night."

"That I feel sure of, Robert, or I should not intrust you with it. I know too well, from my own case, how ill it is to possess a power that one is not fit to wield." Here he stopped and sighed.

"Arrah, be aisy, Mr. Frank; sure, yourself is the king of men," whispered Murphy, reassuringly; but the other took no notice.

"Yes, that is the only way," continued he, thoughtfully. "I tried to make you a friend of this good lad, Dick, but that, through your own fault, has failed. I now make him your superior. You could not give your good-will, it seems; but there will be no excuse for refusing your obedience."

"And is the likes of him to come between me and you, Masther Frank?" asked Murphy, pitifully.

"No, Dick; no man can do that, I think, nor woman either," answered Kavanagh, tenderly. "Don't fret, man. The lad has had honor done him, but not at your expense. Give me your hands, both of you."

He placed them in one another as he had done once before on the night of their first meeting. Robert grasped Murphy's fingers heartily enough, and Murphy returned the pressure, keeping his eyes, however, intently fixed upon Kavanagh's face.

"You see what I am doing, master, for your sake," they seemed to say.

"That's well, Dick; now leave us for the present, for I have some private talk to finish with Mr. Chesney."

"Very good, Masther Frank.—Perhaps, sir"—and here he turned to Robert with an air of hesitating respect—"you will kindly let me know when you have done, and I may come back again." As he said these words, he ran out of the cabin as though he could bear this scene no longer; to address Robert as his superior thus voluntarily, had probably been the hardest task which he had ever set himself to do.

"Poor Dick!" ejaculated Kavanagh remorsefully. "I think that ought to content you, lad."

"Indeed, sir, it was more than I asked, or even desired," answered Robert.

"Perhaps," replied the other; "but it was necessary. I remember when I was at the military college—years ago in France—the only way by which a certain worthy cadet could be saved from a most unmerited persecution was by creating him a sub-lieutenant; and a first-rate officer he made."

"You were in the army, then, sir?" asked Robert simply.

"Yes and no; that is, I had a military training, which might have been useful had circumstances turned out as they were expected to do."

"In Ireland, I suppose?"

"Yes; there is no need to make a secret of the matter now, even if you have not guessed it. I nourished a vain dream, which was only real inasmuch as it was dangerous. On board ship, I was obliged to be Denton; in Herne street, I was Wilson. You see I keep nothing from you, lieutenant."

"Yes, sir," replied Robert naively. "I should like, however, if you would not take it ill, to ask you one more question?"

"What is that?" Kavanagh's tone became suddenly impatient, and even suspicious, and under pretence of settling his skull-cap on his head, he covered his eyes with his hand. "I never promised to tell you all my private affairs, however."

"Indeed, sir, I should not be so impertinent as to inquire into them. But might I ask what sort of man is he whom they call 'Misther Maguire?'"

Kavanagh removed his hand from his face, and revealed an expression of great relief.

"Oh, Maguire?" answered he, gayly. "Yes, he is a strange fellow, and I do not wonder that he has excited your curiosity. Moreover, it is only right it should be satisfied, since it is likely he will be more or less mixed up with our own fortunes. Well, he was the son of a gentleman on a neighboring estate to that of my father, and who, like the bad boys of the story-books, ran away at an early age to sea. He led a very queer life, I fancy—what is called 'a checkered career,' which is mostly black, you know; though I don't believe there was ever much real harm in him. When he returned home after a quarter of a century, he found matters worse than he had left them. His father 'evicted' by the mortgages from what had once been his own property, and other unpleasantries, such as only occur in Ireland. Then he got mixed up in 'the troubles,' and had to flee the country and save his skin—like myself."

"Nay, sir, not so; for it seems to me that he had nothing to lose, and all to gain, whereas you had an estate at stake."

"I had at one time—yes," returned Kavanagh, thoughtfully. "There is something in what you say, perhaps, though we have no right to impute selfish motives. You do not like Mr. Maguire, it seems."

"I don't dislike him, sir, personally, but I confess that—of late—he has seemed to me to be a dangerous man."

"Dangerous! why dangerous?" inquired Kavanagh, quickly.

"Well, sir, I can't exactly say; but this man has great influence among our people, and if he chose to use it ill, there might be great danger. I am certain, at all events, that that is the captain's opinion. You have been ill and confined to your cabin, so that you may not have observed it; but I notice that both he and the other officers of the ship go about armed."

"Armed! How long has that been the case?" inquired Kavanagh with excitement, a deep flush suffusing his pale face.

"Since the day you came on deck in your real character."

"That is strange," muttered Kavanagh; "very strange. Is this a matter of general remark; do the boys know it?"

"I think not, sir; they do not take much notice of anything; but there is one man that knows it beside myself, unless I am much mistaken; and that is Maguire himself."

"Ah; then he should have told me. I mean," added Kavanagh, hastily, "he should have confessed that he had been guilty of a foolish indiscretion. There is no harm in him, nor in my people; but there should be no ground for supposing harm. Keep your eyes open, Robert, for the future, and, above all things, your mouth shut. To talk of danger before some people is like putting a match to a fire-grate that is already laid. And now tell poor Dick that I am ready to see him. To-morrow, or the next day, at furthest, I shall be well and about again. Good-day lad, good-day.

CHAPTER XII.

THE VOLCANIC ISLAND.

The interview was over, and clearly, as it seemed to Robert, hurried to a close by the tidings which he had just communicated. It was evident that Mr. Kavanagh had been unaware of the effect produced by his own appearance among his people, and yet when informed of it, he had not expressed that disapprobation which might have been expected of him. He must surely have known more of Maguire also than he had chosen to reveal, and in that respect, as perhaps in others, he (Robert) was still, therefore, it seemed only half trusted. On the other hand, his appointment, if it could be called such, of second in command to his patron, was at least a proof of extreme favor, while to the fact that it was genuine, Murphy's own behavior abundantly testified.

Neither on the next day nor for many days afterward did Robert again see Mr. Kavanagh. That gentleman was once more reported ill, and remained in his berth visited only by Murphy and Maguire. It would have doubtless been within the scope of Chesney's newly conferred authority to insist on being admitted to the sick man's cabin; but he took no advantage of this. The same wild cries for "Help!" the same half-suffocated sounds were repeated as he heard on the previous occasion, and something hinted to him that whatever might be the nature of his patron's seizures, the presence of an unaccustomed witness like himself would not be welcome to him. The ship's surgeon had attended the patient in the first instance, but of late he had not done so, since, as he explained to Robert, the two men in question thoroughly understood the case, and were competent to deal with it. The ship was by this time advanced far across the Indian Ocean, and was within a few hundred miles of the western coast of Australia, and the emigrants, no longer influenced by Maguire (whom Kavanagh's illness seemed to have greatly sobered, and who was much engaged about the sick man's person,) and excited by the prospect of a termination to their tedious voyage, passed much of their time on deck, looking out for the first glimpse of land. Thus Robert made a more intimate acquaintance than he had hitherto done, not only with those under his own charge, but with the rest of his fellow-passengers, and was much struck with the difference between them. The Tipperary boys, with their wives and families, gave but little thought to their future, appearing to leave that, with great contentedness, in the hands of their patron; while the others were never tired of speculating like children upon the new world they were so rapidly approaching, where potatoes grew without planting, and all were masters, and none servants. But just when they seemed to be on the point of realizing these brilliant visions, Fortune, which had hitherto so favored the voyage of the Star of Erin, turned dead against her; a furious gale sprang up from the north-west, and drove the ship under bare poles hundreds of miles out of her course, at a pace she had never achieved when in full sail. The hatches had to be battened down, and the unhappy tenants of the steerage were reduced to a condition even worse than that in which they had been plunged at first; to the horrors of sea-sickness, were now added unspeakable terrors. In their dark and confined quarters, amid the howling of the tempest, and the straining of the ship's timbers, they looked for nothing less than death, from dawn to night, from night to dawn. This continued for many days, and when the wind slackened and the ship became once more under control, she was pronounced by the captain to be a greater distance from the desired haven than she had been at the beginning of the gale. The sun, indeed, had once more reappeared; the sea, like some passionate domestic despot, who, having committed endless ravage in his wrath, is astonished, now that it is over, that any one should remember it, wore a thousand smiles; but the poor passengers huddled together on deck, and heart-sick with hope deferred, refused to be comforted, and believed themselves doomed to wander over the watery waste for ever. Curiously enough, the condition of Kavanagh had improved during the late commotion, and his first act, when circumstances permitted of an interchange of talk—which had been absolutely impossible during the gale—was to send for Robert, who, to his great surprise, found his patron up and dressed.

"Better, lad; yes, I am better," said he, in answer to his congratulations; "but this bout has given me a lesson. If I had died, it would have been heavy on my conscience—which, alas! has its weight to bear already—that I should have left my sheep with a shepherd indeed, but without the means of pasturing them. Murphy, it is true, is as honest as this blessed sunlight that at last is shining on us again; but with all the good-will in the world to serve me, he has no head for management of any kind. Here are three thousand pounds in English notes, of which you will take charge, taking care at the same time that nobody suspects you of being my banker except for current expenses. When occasion arises, you will make disbursements on our common account and on that of my poor people, which I will audit from time to time. Then, if anything should happen to me—I don't say I apprehend it, but I think it right to take precautions—I leave you my trustee and guardian in their interests; when you shall once have given them a fair start, the balance may be retained by yourself, or, what is better, given to your sweetheart, from one who never knew her, but who wishes her well, as her marriage portion.—It is my own property, man," cried Kavanagh with sudden vehemence, and observing Robert to hesitate. "Do you suppose that I would give away what is *not* my own?"

"Indeed, sir, I was not thinking that at all," answered Chesney earnestly, "but only of your great kindness and generosity; most sincerely do I trust that you may long live to expend this money to greater advantage, doubtless, than I should use; but it is a very large sum; and though such confidence cannot but be gratifying to me, the responsibility is great."

"Nay, nay, lad," said Kavanagh reassuringly; "one can only do one's best, which I have no fear but that you will do. While as to the mere safety of the money, it will be more secure with you, since you will never be suspected of the possession of it, than with myself. I have had warnings that my life is at best a precarious one; and though I flatter myself, could I once escape from this cursed imprisonment, and set a free foot on land— What's that?"

A sudden turmoil had broken out on the deck above them; clapping of hands and shouts of joy were heard; and while they listened, the cabin-door was flung open by Murphy, who rushed in, in a wild state of excitement, crying: "Land, Land! By noon, Mr. Frank, we'll be there."

"It is impossible," answered Kavanagh incredulously, rising from his seat, nevertheless, with an eager light in his eyes. "The captain told me only an hour ago that it would take us a week to make the coast."

"Sure the coast is ready-made, then, for there it is, not half a dozen miles away. I've been up the mast-head to look, and there it lies all green and glorious like Ould Ireland herself, with just a bit of hill like the Hill of Howth growing out of the middle of it."

"The man is drunk," said Kavanagh contemptuously. "Give me *your* arm, Robert, and help me on deck, that I may see with my own eyes."

The joy and excitement in Murphy's face faded as suddenly out as when the slide is withdrawn from a magic-lantern, and leaves the blank white sheet. "'Drunk,' am I?" muttered he, as he watched them go slowly out; "and 'give me *your* arm, Robert!' is it? Well, I obey you, Mr. Frank, and therefore obey *him;* but—how I hate him." On deck, both passengers and crew had all assembled, and it was with some difficulty that Robert could make way for his companion through the crowd, to where the captain stood talking to one of the officers of the ship.

"What is it?" asked Kavanagh eagerly; "what is this nonsense about land?"

"I know no more than yourself," answered the captain coldly and ungraciously, as Robert thought, considering that he was addressing the most influential passenger on board his ship, and moreover a sick man. "That land it is, there is no doubt, as any glass will show you, but how it comes there, is more than I can tell. It is not in the chart, that's certain. Nor can it be the mainland, which lies more than five hundred miles to eastward."

Here a telescope was offered by some bystander, and Kavanagh endeavored to adjust it, but whether from excitement, or the weakness arising from his late illness, his hand was so unsteady that he could make no use of it. "There; do you take it, Robert," said he pettishly, "for I am too weak to hold it. Tell me what you see."

"It is land without doubt," answered Robert, and indeed, to the naked eye, what had seemed a dark cloud resting on the eastward horizon, was already assuming color and consistency; "and if an island, it is a large one—large but low, except for one green hill in the centre; but I see no trace of trees."

"If this was in the Chinese waters," observed the firm but quiet voice of Maguire, "I should be at no loss to tell you what it was."

"Neither should I, if I were nearing the Needles," answered the captain contemptuously, "for then I should say it was the Isle of Wight."

"And that would be a very good guess for a home-voyager," answered Maguire coolly. "A man need only have been as far as Palermo, however, to see an island that has come up out of the sea, and here, if I am not much mistaken, is one of the same kidney. Off the Philippines I have seen half a dozen of them."

"You know a deal more about seafaring, Mr. Maguire, it seems to me, than when you first came on board," remarked the captain significantly, and regarding the object of debate attentively through his glass; "and I don't mean to say that you mayn't be right as to this island. I've seen Nerita myself in the Mediterranean, which sprang up, as you say, in a single night; but this has grass upon it, and looks a well-established concern enough. I only hope it has got fresh water, for we shall want it before many days are out."

"There is something shining like a silver thread," observed Robert, "and running down from the hillside toward the sea; that must surely be a river."

Half an hour more resolved all doubts. The island in question, which had very deep water all about it (a circumstance that corroborated the idea that it was of volcanic origin), so that the ship could sail quite close to it, was of considerable dimensions. It was covered with such beautiful verdure as delighted and refreshed the sea-wearied eyes of all, and had at least two considerable streams of fresh water, still more welcome to the captain's view. A little bay on its more remote shore—the eastern one—formed a natural harbor, and into this the ship was steered and anchored. To see the enfranchised emigrants rush on shore, some rolling like dogs or horses for very joy upon the shining sward, some running along the shore as though to convince themselves that they had at last the use of their legs, and all shouting with mirth, was like beholding a school on "breaking-up" day. Kavanagh himself looked bright and hopeful as Robert had never seen him since they set sail. "Murphy," said he, "I spoke to you harshly and unjustly a while ago. Put that down to my ill health, not to ill-will. Come, let us take our first walk upon dry land together. Do you think that you and Robert, between you, could pull me up yonder hill?"

"One's plenty, Mr. Frank, for a job like that," answered Murphy, eagerly; "just get astride upon my neck—so—that's well. There is not a mother yonder with a child in her arms that feels the burden as light as I do now." And before Robert could offer his assistance—which indeed he would have been loth to do, for Murphy's sake, who would certainly have deeply resented it—the faithful fellow had started for the hill with his master on his shoulders. Robert walked rapidly by their side, for no slow pace would have kept up with Murphy's giant strides, in readiness to give his aid should it be required; and in that order the three left the crowd and climbed the hill. Arrived at the top, Kavanagh descended from his human steed, who had showed no signs of weariness, and proceeded to survey this singular territory; his reconnoissance being supplemented by Robert's eyes, who used the glass. To the latter, accustomed to the thick foliage of the forest, the island looked bare and bald enough; but whatever its foundations might be composed of, the upper soil was evidently rich, and even at the elevation at which they stood far from rocky or barren. Its whole extent could not be less than ten miles long by eleven broad.

"It is quite a little kingdom in itself," murmured Kavanagh, delightedly.

"*Then why should you not reign over it, Masther Frank?*" This rejoinder came from Murphy, and was a much more apt one than might have been expected from his lips; but it was characteristic of the man and of his relations with Kavanagh, that, whereas except for some gleams of humor which seemed themselves to be unconsciously uttered, he was, for the most part, dull and unready, it was often otherwise when speaking with reference to his patron's interests; his wits seemed sharpened by the anxiety he felt to further them; and though judgment was often wanting even then, readiness never failed him. The suggestion he now made, doubtless out of the abundance of his personal loyalty, rather than with any serious idea of its being realized, seemed to strike Kavanagh amazingly.

"Reign over it!" exclaimed he, striking his palms together. "Why not? Dick, you have more wit than ten Maguires. Here is good soil, fresh water, and room to increase and multiply. Why not establish our own colony *here*, where no flag flouts the breeze, to remind us that we are still slaves as well as exiles? Your judgment, Robert, is of the sober sort; what think you of the plan?"

"Well, sir, we can't eat grass, nor can the women and children lie on the bare earth—"

"There is no need for either," interposed Kavanagh, enthusiastically. "We have provisions enough and to spare for months, as the captain told me. We have tents, too, and even houses that can be set up in a few hours. We have seeds in plenty, and agricultural implements of all sorts. I have money, too, far beyond what you imagine—for there was no need to tempt you with the knowledge of it, good lad, to follow my fortunes. Well, why should I not employ it to get all we need from the mainland—clothes, timber, cattle—"

"The whisky is getting low," suggested Murphy, delicately.

"Be serious, you omadhawn. Why not, Robert, I say, use Melbourne as our store-house, but in other respects be independent of the world? The prospect seems a dream—a golden dream; but why should it not be realized? Why *should* I not be king, as Murphy puts it, and you prime minister? Why shouldn't your Lizzy," he added, in Robert's ear, "come out and marry you? A parson shall be imported for the very purpose, look you; there's my hand on it—and after my death you shall be king yourself, and all your progeny princes and princesses. Think of it, man—think of it."

The air and tone of the speaker were wild and excited, beyond anything that Robert had yet seen in him; but the theme itself seemed to excuse it. Strange and fanciful, indeed, it was, but by no means ill adapted to win the ear of youth; and, moreover, there was no doubt, whatever might be the final success of the scheme, that it could be at least inaugurated. To Robert, it is true, it lacked the attraction which it possessed for his patron, in restriction to his own people and dependents; but, on the other hand, here was a home assured for Lizzy and her kindred at the outset; while the idea of his wielding so large a personal influence in the new colony, both at present and in the future, was also, doubtless, not without its influence.

"Do you think your people would themselves be in favor of such a plan?" inquired Robert, doubtfully.

"Do I *think!* no; I am certain." And Murphy laughed a laugh that carried more conviction with it than even his master's words.

Robert himself, indeed, had little doubt that most, if not all, of Kavanagh's immediate followers would hail the plan with delight, and not at all the less so because of its romantic wildness; but still the natural prudence of his character, and his very knowledge that the temptation of Lizzy's immediate coming was having a greater weight with him than *all* other considerations, bade him pause.

"It matters not whether we prosper here or not," continued Kavanagh persuasively. "I shall get the captain to sell me a boat or two—one, at least, large enough to accomplish the voyage to Melbourne, from which place we could send over for the rest. Then all could start afresh, as we had originally intended to do. But I feel certain we shall prosper here. The captain has already taken the bearings of the island, and pronounced on the harbor very favorably. If we ourselves should not colonize it, be sure that others would. You were saying but awhile ago how gladly you would welcome your friends the Alstons in the New World; with how much greater pride can you now invite them to our own private territory! No money shall be spared by me to further your wishes as to their coming; and if the ship that brings them from England cannot be induced to steer a few days out of her course, a vessel should be hired to bring them out from Melbourne immediately upon their arrival. It is a romance, my lad, I grant, from first to last; but there is no reason why it should not be a Romance of Reality."

The enthusiasm of the speaker's tone, the brilliancy of the future he depicted, the brightness and gayety of the scene that lay stretched before them, combined together to sweep away Robert's last lingering doubts.

"So far as I can help you, Mr. Kavanagh," said he impulsively, "my services are altogether at your disposal, whether here or elsewhere."

"That's well, and spoken like yourself," cried the other. "For the present, then, they will be elsewhere. You must go on in the Star to Melbourne, and purchase all things that we may require; then return to us as soon as may be."

"I will do my best, sir," replied Robert hesitatingly; "but you speak as though the affair was settled. There are your people to be spoken to, and the captain—"

"Leave the people to me," answered Kavanagh smiling; "and as for the captain, you may take my word for it he will be glad enough to get rid of us. And now, Murphy, there is one thing more to be done. Two hours ago, I doubted your word when you spoke of land in sight—I am now about to make you compensation— Do you happen to have a drop of whisky in your pocket?"

"Have I a drop of blood in my body, do you mean, Masther Frank!" replied Murphy reproachfully, and producing from his coat a flask of the vintage of his native land.

Kavanagh placed it to his lips, and said: "I name this island *Murphy's Island;*" then took a deep draught.

"The honor is too much for the likes of me, Masther Frank," returned Dick; "I feel quite overcome by it, and must just take a sup myself. Mr. Chesney, I drink your very good health, and a fair voyage to Melbourne." There was something cynical in Murphy's tone, which perhaps at any other time would have excited Robert's notice; but his mind was too full of the scheme he had just heard propounded, and the hopes or dreams which it had evoked, to pay any attention to so trifling a circumstance.

"Come, let us go down and clench this matter," cried Kavanagh impatiently; "for there is not an hour to lose." And they descended to the shore accordingly.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

FIVE YEARS.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY T. J. CHAMBERS.

The young pedagogue, Mr. Lawrence Ashcroft, dismissed his tiresome collection of thick-headed juveniles, locked the school-house door, dropped the key into his pocket, and started for his boarding-place with a sigh of relief. One day more, and the tedious term would be completed, and he would be once more a free man, at liberty to go and come as he pleased. Under such circumstances any reasonable person ought to have been happy; but the young teacher's face was very grave and his step slow and listless.

Mr. Ashcroft was a handsome man, or rather youth, for his age was not more than two and twenty. His form was lithe and graceful, and betrayed evidences of much muscular strength, although that was not the line in which he sought to excel. He had a firm mouth, a Grecian nose, a good forehead, and calm, thoughtful, dark-gray eyes. He carried his head very erect, and people who did not know him fancied that he was somewhat cold and haughty—a very great mistake.

The March evening was warm and sunny, with a balmy softness in the air that hinted of opening buds and violet-covered banks. Mr. Ashcroft took off his hat and allowed the southern breeze to lift the dark curls that clustered around his white brow. He was so much absorbed in thought that he did not notice the slight, girlish figure that glided up to his side.

"What are you thinking about, Mr. Ashcroft?" said the girl, softly.

Mr. Ashcroft turned and smiled into the upturned face.

"Ah, it is you, Agnes!" he said. "I thought you were ahead with the others. I was wondering what the future holds in store for me, little girl. The school closes to-morrow, you know."

"Yes, I know, and I'm so sorry," answered the girl, sadly.

"I am sorry, too, because I will have to go away and leave the friends who have been so kind to me, a friendless stranger. Were it not for that I should be glad."

"Why need you go away?—why not stay in Mapleville?" asked the maiden, earnestly.

"I shall have no employment in Mapleville after the district schools are closed—unless, indeed, I could get a position in the college."

"Perhaps you can. I hear that Professor Longhead wants an assistant."

"I am afraid I should not suit Professor Longhead nor his aristocratic patrons. The 'upper ten' of Mapleville would not care to have their sons and daughters instructed by such an humble mortal as I, even if I had the requisite ability. No, I shall not apply for the situation."

"Then you might teach a school of your own through the summer—the people like you so well that I am sure you could get plenty of scholars."

"Do you think so?" said the young teacher, smiling at his companion's eagerness. "Well, perhaps I may be tempted to follow your advice, Miss Agnes."

Agnes Hartwell was a tall, slender maiden of fifteen—a mere school girl as yet, with a child's freedom of manner. Her dark, elfish face was not pretty, but her black eyes were large and lustrous, and her lips were daintily curved and red as the gentian's scarlet berries. Mr. Ashcroft felt a brotherly affection for the piquant little lady. He had boarded at her father's house all the winter, and was thus thrown constantly in her society. She was his best friend, the confidante of his cares and troubles, his hopes and aspirations; and he had learned to prize her words of childish wisdom very highly.

"See!" suddenly exclaimed Agnes, "yonder comes a lady on horseback—it is Miss Graham, too. Look how gracefully she rides—isn't she beautiful?"

She was rarely beautiful, as Lawrence Ashcroft knew too well. As she drew near, sitting upon her spirited horse with the majesty of a queen, the young man felt a strong desire to fall on his knees before her and render her that homage which seemed to be her due.

Olive Graham was the only daughter of the wealthiest and most important man in the village, Dr. Graham, who was an A. M. as well as an M. D. The doctor, conscious of his own worth, was a pompous man, and his daughter was very much like her father. She could be affable and familiar when she chose, however, and she smiled bewitchingly upon the young school teacher as she halted her prancing pony before him.

"This is a beautiful evening, Mr. Ashcroft. Are you not glad that you will soon be at liberty to enjoy this charming spring weather?"

"I am both glad and sorry," replied Mr. Ashcroft. "My duties have grown rather tiresome, but I shall be sorry to leave my pupils, perhaps never to see them again."

"Ah, but you must stay in Mapleville," smiled Miss Graham.

"That is for you to say, Miss Graham," said the young man, gazing earnestly into the beautiful face.

"Then I command you to stay, of course," laughed the lady, blushing slightly. "But I must tell you my errand. We have arranged to have a little social gathering at our house to-night—just a few choice friends, you know—and we desire you to be present, and Miss Agnes also, if she will come."

"I accept your invitation, of course. Agnes must speak for herself."

"If mamma will let me, I will come," said Miss Agnes.

"Then we shall expect you both. You mustn't fail, Mr. Ashcroft—good-bye."

Miss Graham rode on, turning her head once to smile back upon the youthful school teacher—a smile which sent the blood bounding through his veins and up to the roots of his hair. Agnes Hartwell marked the blush, and looked earnestly at the young man.

"Do you like Miss Graham?" she asked, suddenly.

"Like her?" said Mr. Ashcroft. "Of course; why should I dislike her?"

"I mean, do you like her very much—more than any one else?"

Mr. Ashcroft reflected a moment, while the flush on his cheeks grew deeper.

"Well, Agnes," he said at length, "I will tell you my secret. You are a wise child, and perhaps you can advise me in a matter that concerns my future happiness deeply. I do like Miss Graham better than any one else—I love her with my whole heart—but I fear that it is a hopeless passion. She is so beautiful and so proud, I fear she will never condescend to think kindly of one so poor and unworthy as I. Still she may learn to love me—her manner to-night was very gracious. I think I will tell her of my love, and learn whether or not she cares for me—if she bids me hope, I will move Heaven and earth to win a name and fortune for her sake—if she rejects me, I will go away and drag out my miserable life as best I can. What shall I do, little girl, dare my fate boldly? Why, Agnes, you are crying—what is the matter? Are you ill?"

"I have a terrible headache," murmured the girl, turning away her face and wiping the tears from her eyes, while her slender form shook with suppressed emotion.

"This is strange," said Mr. Ashcroft, anxiously. "You appeared to be well enough a moment ago. Take my arm and let us hurry home, where your mother can do something for your headache. I'm very sorry, Agnes, for I wanted you to go to Mr. Graham a to-night."

"I don't want to go—that is, not now," said Agnes, still with averted face.

The young man marvelled greatly, but he never guessed the real cause of the girl's illness. He considered her only a child; but although very young, Agnes Hartwell possessed a woman's loving heart, and her hero was the handsome young teacher who had treated her with a brother's kindness, while his heart was given to another—a woman as beautiful as a poet's dream.

The *elite* of Mapleville were assembled in Dr. Graham's drawing-room when Mr. Ashcroft entered. You must understand that Mapleville was a very small town, remarkable for nothing except its tolerably well-conducted college. The principal of this institution, Professor Longhead, was there—also his wife, who was related to Dr. Graham. There were nearly a dozen handsome young ladies, and as many young gentlemen present. After an hour or two spent in conversation, which varied "from grave to gay, from lively to severe," supper was served. After this, dancing was proposed, and the professor's wife took her seat at the piano and commenced a lively air. Mr. Ashcroft seldom danced; but the music was very seductive, and he was at length persuaded to take his place on the floor with Miss Graham. He was a graceful dancer, and his tall, lithe figure showed to good advantage. His fair, intellectual face was very attractive, and Miss Graham wished, as she looked at him, that he was something more than a poor school teacher. If he was only Squire Jones's nephew, or Professor Longhead's son, she reflected, what a desirable lover he would be; but as there was no probability of his ever being anything but an unknown school teacher, of course it would be absurd to think of loving him. He was a very agreeable man, however, and there could be no harm in flirting a little with him—he would know that she did not mean anything serious.

With such thoughts as these, Miss Graham chatted gaily with her partner as they floated through the dance. With such a faultlessly beautiful face so near his own, with such long, golden curls touching his shoulders, no wonder that Mr. Ashcroft was bewildered and enchanted; no wonder that he forgot the social gulf which lay between them, when the lady's blue eyes looked so tenderly into his. When the dance came to an end, he drew his partner to a seat by a window, away from the rest of the dancers.

"Miss Graham, you commanded me to remain in Mapleville, this evening?' he said.

"Certainly—and my command must be obeyed," replied Miss Graham, archly.

"There is only one thing that can induce me to stay, and you have the power to grant or refuse it."

"What is that, Mr. Ashcroft?"

"Your love!" he said, taking both her hands in his. "Oh, Miss Graham—Olive—I love you better than my life—I have loved you since the moment I first saw you. I know I am unworthy of you—I know I am poor and friendless—but for your sake I will work night and day—I will win a name and fortune equal to your own."

"Mr. Ashcroft, I did not think you would be so foolish as to tell me this," said Miss Graham, frigidly. "I have been friendly with you—I have treated you as an equal—because I like to encourage talent—because I know that your life must be very lonely; but I did not dream that you would be so presumptuous as to think that I would marry you. Why you are barely able to maintain yourself respectably; and the man whom I marry must be able to give me a high position in society."

"I do not ask you to marry me now," said the young man. "That would be madness, I know. I only ask you to give me hope that I may some day claim your hand. I have talents—I feel that I shall rise in the world, and make myself worthy of your love. Promise that you will not marry another—that you will wait for me till I am in a position to claim you as my wife. We are both very young, and can well afford to remain single a few years longer."

"Mr. Ashcroft, do you think I will bind myself to you?" asked Miss Graham, angrily. "I think your chances of rising in the world are very meagre, and I do not care to become an old maid for your sake. I like you very well as a friend, but I trust you will never mention this subject to me again. I assure you that your suit is hopeless."

"Hopeless, indeed," said Mr. Ashcroft, bitterly, "for I find my idol to be only clay. You have scorned the devotion of a true heart, Miss Graham; may you never be sorry for what you have done. You need not fear that I shall renew the subject, as one such refusal is sufficient. After to-morrow I shall leave Mapleville, perhaps forever; and I pray heaven that I may forget a woman who is as heartless as she is beautiful."

The next day was the closing one of Mr. Ashcroft's school, and, as is usual on such occasions, there was an exhibition of youthful eloquence and ignorance. The papas and some of the mammas gathered in to witness the performances of their promising sons and daughters. The young teacher directed the exercises in a manner that was satisfactory to all, but his face was very pale, and he scarcely smiled once during the day. When the parting address was spoken and the school dismissed, he hurried to his boarding-place and began packing up his books and clothes.

"I am going away at once," he said to Agnes Hartwell, who stood watching him with mournful eyes.

"Not to-night!" said the girl, wondering at this haste.

"Yes, to-night, I will take the six o'clock train, and it is nearly five now. I'm sorry to leave you, Agnes, I believe you are the only true friend I have, but I could not stay here now."

"Then Miss Graham does not love you?" asked Agnes, hesitatingly.

"She refused me with anger and scorn. I might have known it."

"Oh, how could she do it?" said Agnes, with tears in her eyes.

"Why, it was no more than I deserved, I suppose—I should not have been so presumptuous. Of course, I am no fitting match for the belle of the village. I suppose she will marry Professor Longhead's son."

"She is not half good enough for you, if she is so pretty."

"Well, it is all over with now," said Mr. Ashcroft, trying to laugh. "Perhaps it is better as it is, I shall get over the disappointment after awhile. And see, here, Agnes, is something to remember me by; if we never see each other again, you will still know what your friend looked like."

He handed her a locket, in which was set a tiny photograph of himself. She looked at it for a moment, and placed it in her bosom.

"Thank you. I will keep it always," she said.

"Will you? I will never forget your kindness, little sister, good-bye."

He stooped and kissed her cheek. The blood rushed to her face, and for a moment she seemed almost beautiful. Her eyes were full of tears which she strove in vain to repress.

"I will never forget you, Mr. Ashcroft," she murmured. "Good-bye."

A few moments later, Mr. Ashcroft left the house which had been the only home he knew in the village. Once he looked back, and saw the slender, daintily-robed figure of Agnes standing in the door-way. He waved his hand to her, and strode onward, little suspecting the grief and desolation that filled the young girls heart. He had called her his "little sister," but the love which the child-woman felt for him was deeper and stronger than a sister's affection—it was the first awakening of that passion which is the joy and the sorrow of a woman's life.

Five years have passed away. Five years! what changes are wrought in that time—an age in prospect, but a brief space in retrospect. Empires and kingdoms rise and fall; fortunes are made and lost; youth merges into manhood and womanhood, and the aged and infirm sink silently into the grave.

Mapleville is still a sleepy village, with but little increase of business or population; but some important changes have taken place in the fortunes of its inhabitants.

Dr. Graham is dead, and his daughter, the proud and beautiful Miss Olive, is a penniless orphan, obliged to earn her bread by filling a subordinate position in the college. Her father lost his fortune through some unlucky speculations, and his proud mind never recovered from the shock occasioned by his downfall. Miss Graham is still single, for she is as proud as ever, and marriageable men are not abundant in Mapleville.

The college is a flourishing institution, although Professor Longhead is no longer fit for active duty. He has engaged a gentleman to fill his place, however, and the new professor is expected daily.

"What is the new principal's name?" asked the teacher of mathematics of Professor Longhead.

"Ashcroft, I believe; yes, Lawrence Ashcroft is the way he writes it."

"Can it be the same person who taught the public school here five years ago?" said Miss Graham, deeply interested.

"Well, I fancy not," replied the professor. "This Mr. Ashcroft is rather wealthy as well as highly educated. he inherits all the property of his deceased uncle, who was thought to be worth fifty thousand at least. He writes me that he intends to purchase a house, and take up his residence here; so Mapleville can then boast of at least one distinguished citizen."

"Is he a young man?" continued Miss Graham.

"You are thinking of setting your cap for him, I see, young lady," laughed Professor Longhead. "Well, I cannot tell you his age, but he is unmarried; and if he is a little old, he will be a very good catch."

A few days after this conversation Lawrence Ashcroft, A. M., arrived in the village and entered upon his duties as principal of the Mapleville College. He also purchased the handsomest house in town, furnished it elegantly, and hired a housekeeper and servants to keep it in order. Evidently he was a man of means as well as letters—such a man as the people of Mapleville delighted to honor.

All were disappointed, and the young ladies in particular agreeably so, in his personal appearance. They expected to see a middle-aged man, with a grave face and a bald head; but Professor Ashcroft was certainly not more than thirty. He would have appeared younger than that, except for the ample brown beard that covered his lips and chin. His grey eyes were keen and lustrous, his dark hair glossy and abundant. His form was erect and vigorous, and his dress tasteful and elegant. Altogether, he was an eminently handsome man.

The gossips of Mapleville began at once to wonder where the learned man would find a wife worthy of him, and they soon came to the conclusion that Miss Olive Graham was the proper lady. She was beautiful, accomplished, and sufficiently young; she belonged to a very good family; and the professor, they imagined, could well afford to take a dowerless bride.

Miss Graham herself sometimes indulged in such reflections as these; but Professor Ashcroft seemed insensible to her charms. He was polite and affable, as their professional duties threw them much together; but that was all.

One evening as Mr. Ashcroft and Miss Graham walked home together from the college, (Miss Graham lived with Professor Longhead's family, and Mr. Ashcroft's residence was a few steps from the old professor's mansion,) the young man said, looking earnestly in his companion's face—

"Do you remember the young fellow who taught school here one winter, five years ago?"

"I do; his name was the same as yours. Perhaps he was related to you?"

"He was. He fell in love with a beautiful lady here—but she jilted him, and nearly broke his heart."

"Well, he did not die, I suppose. What became of him?"

"He was an orphan; his only near relative was a wealthy uncle, who, having no family of his own, adopted the young man as his heir, and sent him to college for three years. A year ago this uncle died, and left all his property to his nephew. The young man still had a strange liking for this quaint village; he came here a week ago, and is now the principal of its famous college."

"You?" exclaimed Miss Graham, in astonishment.

"I, Miss Graham—I am the poor schoolteacher whose presumption received from you a deserved rebuke."

"I was wrong—I was so proud; but I liked you all the time," stammered the lady.

"Then perhaps you would not give me the same answer now?"

"I—I don't think I would, Professor Ashcroft."

"Well, you need not trouble yourself to decide, as I do not intend to renew my suit," said Professor Ashcroft, coldly. "Do not think, Miss Graham, that I respect you any the less, because you are now in humbler circumstances; but I will never marry a woman who values a man solely for his worldly possessions. Although I am now wealthy and honored, I am no worthier than I was five years ago. You did not love me then, and you cannot love me now. Good-evening."

They had arrived at Professor Longhead's residence. Olive Graham rushed to her room, and indulged in a violent fit of weeping, caused by disappointment and anger. To be scorned by a man whom she had once thought so far beneath her—it was too much.

Professor Ashcroft did not enter his handsome mansion, but walked on down the street until he was outside the village. Before him stood the school-house in which he had once held sway. It looked very familiar, and the tow-headed urchins wending their way homeward, were as noisy as those whom he had often vainly reprimanded. But the teacher, who was just leaving the door as he approached, was an utter stranger to him. She was a girl, not more than twenty, with a face that was wildly beautiful—a creamy complexion, and large, black, gypsyish eyes, with full, intensely red lips. Her figure was rounded, with a slow and willowy grace of motion. She gave one glance at the young man, her cheeks flushed scarlet, and she raised one hand quickly to her throat; then she turned and walked slowly away.

Wondering at the girl's agitation, Mr. Ashcroft walked to the door of the school-house. Something bright on the ground at his feet caught his eye—he stooped and picked it up. It was a small, gold-plated locket, very like the one he had once owned. He pressed the clasp, and it flew open, revealing a young and smiling, handsome face—it was a picture of himself, taken when he was a beardless boy of twenty-one.

"Good Heaven!" exclaimed the grave professor, "can that girl yonder be the little Agnes whom I used to know? It must be so; yet what a change."

Holding the locket in his hand, he strode rapidly after the girl's retreating figure.

"I beg your pardon, young lady," he said, as he came up with her, "but I found this lying by the door of the school-house. I suppose you must have lost it."

He handed her the locket. The schoolmistress gave a little cry as she looked at it.

"It is mine," she said. "I am much obliged to you, sir; for I value this trifle highly. It was given to me by a dear friend."

"Is your name Agnes Hartwell?" asked the professor, abruptly.

"It is, sir," answered the school-mistress, looking at him curiously.

"Little Agnes, don't you know me?" exclaimed the young man, holding out his hands. "I am Lawrence Ashcroft, although I do not look much like that picture now."

The girl's face was dyed with blushes, as she gave him both her hands.

"And you are Professor Ashcroft, of Mapleville College, now?" she said, shyly.

"Even so," he laughed, "but to you I am plain Lawrence Ashcroft. How you have changed, Agnes, in five years. I should never have known you, but for that locket."

"My heart is not changed," she replied—then she blushed deeply, and turned away her face.

The young man saw the blush, and his heart throbbed very fast. Had this girl loved him when he thought her only a child—did she love him still? If he could win her for his wife, he thought, he would be happy indeed.

"But *my* heart is changed," he said. "Five years ago I fancied that I loved Olive Graham; now I know that I love you, Agnes, with a love which will never die, for you are good and true, while Miss Graham was proud and heartless. Can you care for me any, Agnes? You used to like me, I think, when I called you 'little sister.'"

"Oh, Mr. Ashcroft, I loved you then better than all the world; I have never ceased to love you," said Agnes, her beautiful eyes full of tears.

"My darling!" said Mr. Ashcroft, pressing her hand to his bearded lips. "And I was once so foolish as to think that Miss Graham was the only woman in the world for me! You must marry me, Agnes, within a month—my house needs a mistress badly."

"Oh, Professor Ashcroft, I am a poor, ignorant girl; I am not worthy of you," sobbed Agnes.

"I am not worthy of *you*, but I am going to marry you, if you will have me."

And the learned professor sealed the bargain with a kiss.

Great was the astonishment in Mapleville when it was discovered that Professor Ashcroft and Agnes Hartwell were married. The gossips said that it was altogether too sudden—that the lady was too young—that the professor was certainly mad, to throw himself away upon a girl without fortune or accomplishments; but neither the professor nor his wife have been heard to complain of their bargain; and if they are satisfied, the world need not complain.

A SAN FRANCISCO GHOST.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY MARGARET HOSMER.

A singular thing happened in our family some years ago, which we never could fully explain.

It was in this wise. My brother-in-law, Colonel Ferry, was ordered out to San Francisco to attend to some coast business, and my sister who had been in excellent health up to the time she reached the Isthmus, fell ill on the Pacific side of a sinking fever that seemed to prostrate her in mind as well as body.

She was so weak and nervous when we reached the city and got on shore, that hotel life with its noise and bustle was unendurable to her, and her husband and I went out to look for a dwelling-house where we could establish something like home-life, and nurse her back to health and cheerfulness again.

We wandered about for two or three days, going back in the evening with descriptions of the result of each day's search, and having all the possibilities we calculated on rendered impracticable by Bertha's dispirited criticism, until at last we quite gave up in despair.

Either George or I could have decided on a dozen places if left to ourselves, but he would say to me in a helpless way,

"Now Mary, what do you suppose Bertha would think of such a hill as this?" or, "Do you believe Bertha would like so many vines around the windows, or could she be satisfied with a basement dining-room, &c., &c?" and I would answer by propounding suppositions on my own account, and so we never came to a conclusion.

Thus Bertha grew worse, and we were hourly more undecided, until she found a morning paper and an advertisement, and suddenly waking to energy and a business manner requested us to go and secure the house named in it.

George took the journal and found the advertisement, and began its careful perusal.

"Why, it is furnished," he exclaimed—"Yes; that will save so much trouble."

"And there are twelve rooms."

"We need only occupy as many as we please."

"I dare say it will be very expensive," I hinted.

"It expressly says 'terms reasonable.'"

"But I thought you had rather have a home of your own, Bertha."

"Well, it will be our own as long as we pay for it?" There was a conclusiveness about my sister's tone, and an unusual determination in her manner that quite startled us. She looked over the advertisement once more, and it seemed to increase in attractiveness at the second reading.

"Beautifully furnished, fine rooms, every convenience and excellent neighborhood, what more would you? But Mary and you have fallen into a habit of vacillating; George, and I do not dare to trust you with this gem of a house, you are sure to let it slip through your fingers, so I will go with you. I can ride there, and it will do me good."

Now this was the first gleam of interest she had shown in anything since our arrival in the city, and we were too wise to discourage it. She really seemed to forget her weakness, and dressed briskly so as to be ready as soon as either of us, and we all started together.

On the way just a glimpse of her indecision returned.

"Will you take it right away, George?" she asked.

"Assuredly, if it pleases you?"

"Yes, but suppose there should be some one there that we could not talk freely before, and you should be required to decide at once. Wait, let me see; if, as we come out in the hall and you and Mary are suited I will say 'yes, dear I am quite satisfied' that will decide it: and then you can close the bargain at once."

"I understand," said George.

"But if I say 'Let us think about it;' pray do not be precipitate."

"No, certainly not," said George.

You see we rather humored her, for usually she was just the dearest, best, and most reasonable of women, but this fever seemed to have quite upset her spirits and made her at times a little capricious.

I scarcely expected the reality to equal the description given in the paper, but when our carriage stopped at the number we had given the coachman, we found it to be a really splendid house with a lovely little parterre and fountain in front, and handsome mosaic vestibule and ornamental inner doors.

An odd looking young girl with inky black eyes and a colorless sort of face opened the door. She was dressed as a common servant, and had a peculiarly frisky, comical air about her with which her serious eyes and pallid face contrasted strangely.

George asked her if we could see the house, and she said she could call Miss Van Artlandt, and disappeared, leaving us in the hall.

We did not have to wait long before a pretty, but sad looking young lady appeared and received us politely. She was very silent, answering us whenever she could by a simple inclination of the head, but her manner was sufficiently courteous, and we did not pay much attention to her as our interest was more in the house than in her.

The furniture was handsome, and in good taste, and the rooms were lofty and spacious; everything was well appointed and well kept, but an airless depressing sort of feeling began to steal over us as we passed from room to room, and I looked round, really anxious to find some fault in the arrangements by which to account for the growing aversion, but everything was provokingly complete, and there wasn't a defect that we could mention.

When we returned to the parlor, Bertha stood still in the middle of the floor and tried to trace the pattern of the handsome carpet with the end of her parasol.

"Well, dear, what do you think?" asked George while the silent young lady who had followed us around with an eager look, as if she was waiting anxiously for our decision stepped toward the window to raise the curtain.

"Why, there are so many family portraits that the rooms seem quite peopled with them," whispered Bertha, and she glanced toward two full-length pictures on either side the handsome mantel mirror.

They were the only portraits in the room, smaller copies of them adorned the large chamber overhead and medallions of the same faces hung in the dining-room. They were not remarkable, except that the lady's face was handsome yet cunning; her figure curved a little, and her face wore a smile of such a subtle character, that it seemed as if she were bending forward with a secret she meant to whisper.

Miss Van Artlandt came back from the window and resumed her place beside us with an expectant air.

"Well," began George again, with a strong demonstration of cheerfulness, "we have seen the house, and it only remains for you ladies to decide."

"Oh, I am quite satisfied," said Bertha with an air of misgiving, "but perhaps we had better—"

"Certainly," said George, "the terms, I had almost forgotten a very important item—the terms."

He looked toward Miss Van Artlandt inquiringly, and hesitated.

"If you will favor me with the address of your agent" he suggested. Bertha and I walked away and began to examine the view from the back windows, just as we heard the young lady say:

"I transact all business connected with my property myself. I am alone in the world, unfortunately, and obliged to attend to my own interests."

"What an odd young person," whispered Bertha. "Oh, Mary, how that woman in the portrait seems to follow one with her eyes. I am so glad that George understood my look. There seems to be a mysterious influence about this place. I think it must be that picture."

We affected to be engaged in looking out of the back window, and George talked to the young lady; by and by he came over to us with a satisfied air, and said, "Now then if you are ready I am quite at your service," and so we bowed to Miss Van Artlandt, and going out into the hall found the odd-looking maid waiting to open the door for us. When we got into the carriage Bertha drew a long breath.

"I am so glad that I had the forethought to make the arrangement I did, George dear," she said, "I could not bear to say anything against the house before that young lady, but it really is sepulchral, and those pictures seem to absorb the whole room."

"What," cried George with a start, "did you not say that you were quite satisfied?"

"Dear me, I am sure I said we had better wait, and Mary said so too, that is, she looked so; and now pray what *have* you done?"

"I have taken the house, and what is more, I've done so irrevocably, for the poor young lady seemed to be so anxious and uncertain that I pledged my word of honor, to relieve her mind."

Bertha fell back with an air of resignation. "We can take down the pictures and heavy curtains, and when the light comes into the parlor it will be quite cheerful" I said—encouragingly.

"I scarcely think that I would disturb the furniture; Miss Van Artlandt might not like it; the fact is, the young lady is all alone in the world, an orphan, saddened by the recent loss of both parents, and she expressly stipulated that she should be allowed to remain in the house, and on that account the rent is merely nominal."

George spoke very fast, and flushed with his words. We both saw that in engaging to board and lodge the strange young woman he had not calculated on the effect of introducing such a mournful element into our small family circle, and that sober second thought made him regret his temerity.

Bertha had fallen back already, and she remained so.

"She's a dreadful girl," she murmured, "she smells of black crape, and her bombazine rattles like bones as she walks."

"Now don't be childish, Bertha, dear," said George, rallying, "You really need something to rouse you, and if this young lady's presence seems a bore at first, you will soon find that her society will cheer and amuse you."

Bertha groaned slightly and shut her eyes as if to close out the view of such entertainment—but she said nothing more, and presently, as if recognizing the futility of murmuring against a fixed decree, my sister changed her manner, and began thoughtfully,

"Mary dear, let us put calla lilies in those lava vases and trim the alabaster ones with fuschias," and then she followed this tasteful idea by devising where we should place certain small ornaments we had brought with us on the steamer.

We both hailed this practical turn, and as soon as we reached the hotel, George and I hastened to pack and get ready to move, there being nothing to prevent our taking possession of our new house at once, as Miss Van Artlandt had said her servant would be glad to remain and hire with us.

We were to go next morning, and I rose early and started in advance of my sister to attend to the installation of the girl with the pale face and frisky manner.

She opened the door for me, and said that Miss Leonie, her young lady, had gone out for the day, but the keys were all on the hall table, and she would show me everything.

She seemed to regard the change in proprietors as a good joke, and laughed when I asked her if she were quite willing to enter my sister's service.

"Oh la yes, I'd just as lief," she said.

She told me her name was Bab, and said she could cook and do all kinds of household duty pretty well, but she shook her head when I spoke of another girl, and begged that the washing and ironing might be done out of the house and she left to manage the rest of the work.

"Please try me, miss," she urged when she noted my doubtful pause, "I'm sure you'll be satisfied, if you will only try me, and strange girls make so much trouble in a family."

"Well," I said, "my sister must decide, and now we must go over the closets and see where we can store our things."

We went up into the largest and handsomest front chamber, which seemed the proper one to get ready for Bertha There was no disorder or dust in the room, and yet it had a dull, airless oppressiveness about it that made me feel it must be thoroughly cleansed before it could be made habitable.

I suggested this to Bab, and she looked round critically—

"There has been no one in it since—since it was put in order, and I dusted it yesterday myself, but if you had rather, I'll brush it up again."

"Let me first wipe this wardrobe out, and then you may," I said. I opened the mirrored doors and saw a handsome capacious closet with shelves at one side and rows of polished pegs on the other. It was empty, and had been dusted carefully, yet I found a scrap of striped linen sticking out of one of the seams in the wood. I pulled at it, but it would come no farther. I tried to push it back out of sight, but it stuck there, and so I brushed round it with the duster and closed the doors, as Bab was ready to begin sweeping. The next room was equally large, and it looked brighter and pleasanter although it was not so handsomely furnished. It was beautifully neat and needed no additional cleaning, neither did the hall rooms, which were equally pretty.

The bath-room was in the center of the house, and on the other side of it, descending a step or two from the main hall, was the library, out of which opened a pretty room with a verandah, the door of which I found locked. I had been going about duster in hand, peeping into all the nooks and corners, and had arrived at this closed chamber when Bab came down with her dust pan; she passed close beside me and I saw that dried leaves and shreds of decayed white flowers made up the sum of its contents.

I had seen no vases in the chamber, and I wondered where they came from. Bab explained it.

"They were left from the funeral, you know; they dried up and got chipped and scattered round."

"Whose funeral, Bab?"

"Hers," she jerked her head toward a crayon drawing on the staircase, which I had not noticed before. It represented the same handsome face, with its narrow, cunning smile and its neck curved forward like a snake's.

"Mrs. Van Artlandt's?"

Bab nodded, and making up her face into a comical grin, shrugged her shoulders and went down-stairs.

"Scarcely what one would understand by the idea of an attached servant," I thought, and then I began to worry about Bertha's finding out who her predecessor was, and calling Bab to bring me up some flowers from the garden I went into the front chamber to beautify it a little with her favorites.

Over the mantel hung an oil portrait of the pervading woman. She seemed always waiting to catch your eye, and then she appeared to smile and take you captive, so that you could not shake off that eager absorbing gaze with which she held you.

Bab was scarcely a person to appeal to; already her odd and ill-timed grimaces had made me feel uncomfortable, yet I felt I must rely on her to keep the secret of those withered flowers.

"You saw my sister yesterday, Bab; did you notice that she looked delicate?"

Bab summed up her condition in a very few words.

"Kind of nervous and skeery," she suggested.

"Yes, she is easily alarmed and so I beg that you will not allude to the lady who died here, nor mention the shreds of funeral flowers that gave this room such an earthy smell."

"All right," she said, "I won't mention it, *I* promise you." She laid such a peculiar emphasis on the personal pronoun that represented herself, that I asked quickly—"Miss Van Artlandt would not be likely to speak of it, would she?"

"Oh, not she, never fear."

"Then I am glad I asked you to be silent," I said; and the trunks having arrived, I began unpacking and arranging my sister's things, while Bab went down-stairs to prepare luncheon from the stores my brother had already sent home.

I had no sooner opened the wardrobe door than the piece of striped linen attracted my attention again. I pulled at it once more, and finding it immovable I took out my scissors and snipped it off close to the wood. The floor being freshly swept I put the scrap in my pocket, and hurried through with the rest of the work so successfully that when Bertha arrived her garments were all in place, her trunks in the large closet, and her bureau-drawers filled with nicely folded linen. Besides this, I had hung up one or two pretty pictures from home, and disposed around her favorite trifles that I knew would please her eyes.

She was perfectly delighted to note the change, and declared that the house was quite transformed, that she could not understand why it had ever struck her as gloomy or depressing. The favorable feeling deepened when we sat down to our first meal, unchecked by the presence of the strange young lady. Bab had proved herself a capital cook, and taken George's heart in the act.

"This doesn't taste like hotel fare," said he exultingly, and even Bertha discovered quite an appetite.

Miss Van Artlandt came back in time for our late dinner. She seemed courteous, though habitually silent, and after a few words went to her room to dress.

She was ceremonious, as it appeared, and put our poor appearance to shame by her exquisite toilet at dinner. Although she wore deep mourning, she contrived to have it both rich and becoming, and she was very particular in the observance of etiquette throughout the meals.

The dining-room was directly under the library, and she seemed to lead the way in that direction after dinner was over. Here we sat for an hour or so, and I found that Miss Van Artlandt's silence was never broken except when politeness demanded speech, yet she seemed to take great pleasure in our presence, and had such sad, wistful-looking eyes that I pitied her, though I wished, for Bertha's sake, she could have been less like black buckram in her demeanor.

I was very tired the night we first slept in our new home. I had been running about all day, and my feet ached, and my head felt heavy. I almost fell asleep while I was undressing. But, stupid as I was, I noticed that the walls must be very thin, for I could hear a rustling sound which I supposed was Bertha's movements in the next room, and yet it appeared to be close beside me, and made me quite fidgety until I lost consciousness of everything in slumber.

My sister's face at the breakfast table was not inspiriting—it was quite pale, with melancholy lines drawn about the mouth, and her voice was correspondingly hopeless.

"I am afraid you did not rest well, dear," I said.

"Nervous," responded George, with feeling, "decidedly nervous and feverish."

Bertha glanced toward Miss Van Artlandt, and then compressed her lips as if to conquer a disposition to burst into tears. We were rather a dull party, and although my brother and I did our best to appear cheerful, we did not succeed beyond a spasmodic smile or two, for Bertha's frightened depression, and the strange young lady's wistful gloom, operated too powerfully to be resisted by our weak efforts.

If there could be anything more dispiriting than Miss Van Artlandt's sadness, it was her maid's grotesque gayety. Though with this drawback of indulging in a sort of galvanic mirthfulness, she was the most excellent of servants. She was brisk, orderly, and obedient, and accomplished more than any girl I had ever seen at work before. But no jumping Jack with a gutta-percha countenance could have been more horribly antic than she, and that with no ostensible reason, which made it the more bewildering. When she carried out her dishes, she cut a private caper or two between each relay—and even while she waited at table, she would roll up her eyes, twist her mouth round, and make her nose actually gymnastic, as if to relieve some diabolical humor that oppressed her.

During our first week's experience, this hilarious visitation kept becoming more and more frequent, and George would only have succeeded in repressing a sigh over Bertha's dejected appearance, when the sudden sight of Bab's antics would cause him to start, and sometimes look quite wild.

I really pitied the poor fellow; and when a few days after we were completely settled, he came home in great haste and with a disturbed air, to say he had just received a despatch which demanded his immediate presence at San Luis Obispo, I felt really glad, though Bertha did break down and remain tearful all through the packing of his valise.

We had fallen into a habit of gloom, and a change for any of us would necessarily produce a good result. He would shake off the impression of Bertha's sickness, and come back with the vigor of change and a new experience to enliven us.

I told Bertha so when I came back from seeing him off and found her crying in her chamber, her head buried in the cushion of the lounge. She was not disposed to take comfort.

"What will become of us in this terrible room alone," she moaned. "Oh, Mary, it is just as full as it can hold of sighs and whispers; I listen to them till I think I shall go mad!"

"Now, Bertha," I remonstrated, "how very silly that is; I wonder George allows you to talk so: I might as well say I heard it, because the sound of your talking comes into my room, and a murmuring sort of noise is heard every night as I go to sleep."

"Oh," screamed my sister, looking aghast, "then you do hear it too. George and I never open our lips: we are too much frightened; he pretends he isn't, but he trembles sometimes, and calls it a chill—"

"What do you mean, Bertha?" I inquired, solemnly.

Then my poor little sister replied, that they had at first thought the conversation from the next house was penetrating the wall, for they gradually became aware of faint whisperings intermingled with a rustling noise that seemed to move about the bed.

George had argued her out of complaining at the table as she meant to do, so as to get Miss Van Artland to explain its meaning, if possible.

Thus she had borne the growing horror of these inexplicable sounds until it seemed that she must lose her mind.

"Why do you not make a light, and search everywhere," I suggested.

"We keep a light all the time. I would not lie down without one for the world," she cried, energetically: "it is bad enough to have sounds without sights: and every night I lie staring, expecting the horrid whisperings will assume a form and terrify me out of my miserable life."

"You are not very well, dear, and the party-wall between us and our next-door neighbors is deplorably thin. Come and sleep with me until George comes back, and you will soon get over the idea."

Bertha looked around apprehensively as if she feared to be overheard.

"I think the—the thing, whatever it is, wanders all over the house: I almost saw it in the small room next the pantry."

I tried to laugh, but did not succeed very well. Bertha shuddered.

"Oh, pray don't," she whispered: "it is really awful, and it wears a striped sort of dress. Let me tell you how it was. Night before last, when you had tired yourself dusting and arranging all the books in the library, and gone to bed, I went down-stairs to get a goblet of water, and expected to see George sitting in the dining-room finishing his cigar, while he read the letter that he had just that evening received from his general. He was sound asleep in the arm-chair, and the gas was so low that it barely showed me his figure. I tried to turn it up, but could not reach it—and while I was stretching my arm, somebody in a striped skirt that rustled, went quickly by me, and entered that little room we don't use."

"Oh, Bertha, how could that be, when it is always kept locked?" I exclaimed.

"That is it," wailed Bertha: "if it

hadn't been locked, I should not have felt a shadow of alarm—but to glide through a door as that thing did. Oh, dear!"

"You should have asked George to turn up the gas and satisfied yourself by searching."

"We did turn up the light, and we did search—but as for satisfying ourselves, Mary, you couldn't expect such a thing. George protested till he was tired, and said he had often fancied he beheld appearances and all that, but I saw the skirt, and I saw it pass through that door."

"What kind of a skirt did you say?"

"A queer striped one that rustled, but it looked like chintz or linen rather than silk."

I thought of the bit of material of that kind which I had cut out of the wardrobe—but my poor little sister was such a victim to terror, that I did not dare to allude to it—but listened while she described the elaborate search they had made; and how George looked high and low for the key of that small room, and could not find it, though Miss Van Artlandt had given it to him only the day before.

"Let us go right down this minute and examine the closed room," I suggested; "see, here is the key on this ring, and it will seem so absurd to imagine that any one could get through the locked door, when we see the innocent-looking little place, that you will laugh and get over the feeling you have about it."

Bertha didn't seem at all sure of such a consummation; but she examined the key first, and then rose and went down with me, whispering as she went.

"The worst of it is, George says I sha'n't tell Miss Leonie, because she seems so sad; if it's her ghost, she ought to know it, and be responsible for it, I think; do not you?"

I laughed and said "Certainly," and going into the dim dining-room, tried to be very chivalrous, though it gave me such a chill to pass through it, with all its shutters closed, that I made a pretence of needing more light for an exploration, and threw them all open.

The little room was a curious one, simply because in size and appointments it differed entirely from any other in the house. It was not more than twelve feet in one direction and eight in another, and its furniture was of the plainest and most meagre style. A small bedstead of painted wood, a plain chest of drawers, and a small table and two chairs made up its sum total. Its floor was covered with matting, and it had only one badly-lighted window, which looked out on the boarded side entrance through the garden to the back part of the house, and was shaded by a faded green damask curtain, and this was all.

"Not a very mysterious-looking place, you must confess, Bertha," I said, but I did not laugh, nor did she. We both peered round curiously and examined the dull white walls, as if we expected to find some elucidating inscription on its surface.

"That—that thing I told you of came in here," persisted my sister. "I know it did, for I saw it as plain as I see you now. Ah, what is that?"

She screamed and ran to me in a wild, affrighted way, but it was only Bab, come to ask about lunch, as she said.

She relieved her mind by twisting up her face into a queer knot before she gave this explanation, and then waited with her eyes cast up and her lips drawn down to hear what Bertha had to say.

"Bab," said my sister, suddenly remembering that George hadn't interdicted questioning in her case, "does any one ever sleep in the room? I mean any one you know, or who visits Miss Leonie?"

"Not likely," responded Bab briefly. "They couldn't do it if they tried."

"Why not, Bab?"

Bab untwisted her face, and all of a sudden becoming grave, said:

"There are some places where sleep will not come. This is one of them."

Bertha drew close to her, and her eyes grew large with wonder, mixed with fear.

"Pray, tell me why, Bab. I want to know all about it, I cannot tell you how much," she pleaded.

But Bab's seriousness vanished as suddenly as it came. She took refuge in her grimaces again and said, "How should she know? 'Twasn't any of her business to account for such things; her duty was to get lunch, and she wanted to know just what was required for the then pending meal."

Miss Leonie's noiseless feet had brought her heavy black robes into the room, and she stood close behind Bab as she spoke. The girl knew she was there before either of us was aware of her presence, and I saw by the change that had come over her she did not mean her former mistress to find her gossiping with us about the house.

"We are wondering over this odd little room, Miss Leonie," I said as lightly as I could. "It seems out of keeping with the rest of the house, I think."

"California houses are arranged to suit the families for whom they are built," she said briefly. "I presume this was meant for a man-servant who took care of the place, by sleeping on the first floor, or it may have been a housekeeper's room."

"I thought your parents built the house themselves," I ventured to say, for I really did not see why we should be afraid to ask a question on such a common-place subject.

Her face changed; she displayed great repugnance to answering at all, but after some faltering and hesitation, finally said, "No—she believed not; that is, she did not know."

Bertha had slipped out of the small room and got round into the sunshine, as it came through the open dining-room windows. I was on the threshold still when the door came closed with a bang that pushed me off my balance. I am quite sure there was no perceptible draught, the windows were in no place opposite to each other, nor were the doors situated so as to cause one. I know also that Miss Leonie's pale face grew a shade paler, but she said, with forced composure:

"There always was a strong current of air through that chamber," and went quickly out of the room.

Bertha's eyes retained their wonder, and she looked helplessly at me for a solution I could not offer, so I became very much occupied about lunch, and tried to seem as careless and easy as I could.

I thought a good deal about that fancy of my sister's, and persuaded myself to be very sorry over it; at the same time I became deeply interested in Bab, and made as many errands as I could into her kitchen that day. I arranged a series of surprises by which to extract information from her, and began at once by asking her if she had been long in San Francisco.

"A good while," she responded.

"But how long?" I repeated.

"Oh, a number of years," she said.

"Are your parents living at home?" I asked at that same time, to which she replied:

"I am a regular orphan, without a living soul to look out for my interests, yet I've got a queer kind of friend, too." At this she twisted her countenance into such an unearthly shape that the wonder is she ever got it smoothed out again, and the inquiry closed for that time, for not another word could I get from her after that.

Then again I asked her if Mrs. Van Artlandt had resembled her pictures, saying that Miss Leonie did not seem to have her mother's face at all.

"They are so like her that they can walk and talk," she said. "She gave her mind to having her handsome face painted over and over again, and so she put some of herself into each picture."

"Her husband is mild and timid-looking," I hinted, afraid to express surprise, lest that should close her confidence. "His portrait has nothing distinctive about it, but hers is the most strongly marked and characteristic one I ever saw."

"He had nothing remarkable about him, except that he could be shaped any way you wanted to make him; but she was a wonderful woman, ha, ha, more wonderful than she thought herself even."

Bab laughed softly, as if she had a hidden meaning in what she said—indeed she always laughed that way—and after a single ha, ha, ha, she would clip short her hilarity, like her conversation, so that no one could get another word or grin out of her until she had changed her mood.

Miss Leonie's habit was to go to bed early; that is, she retired to her room within an hour or two after dinner, and as she always led the way to the library and seemed to avoid the parlor, it had become a disused apartment.

On the afternoon of George's departure two of the army ladies came to call on us, and stayed chatting pleasantly until it was nearly twilight, and then Bertha proposed that we should return there after dinner, and sit the rest of the evening.

It was a short meal and we found the fading light still lingering when we took our places at the window and looked out into the empty street. It was not an hour for business nor promenade, everything was still, and Bertha and I were both unusually silent, till rousing myself from a long fit of musing, I looked round and found the room quite dark, and Bertha not in sight. I got up quickly and groped my way toward where she had been sitting, and as nearly as I could judge had half-way reached her chair when somebody came between us. I could not tell who it was, or by what means the figure had got there; the only light the room held was a faint reflection from the street lamp that struck the opposite wall where the woman's portrait hung, and shed a pale, uncertain sort of gleam over the carpet beneath. I saw the gilded frame of the picture, but the figure seemed gone, and this outline of a form between my sister and me gradually assumed its exact appearance, only while the picture was robed in ruby velvet, this seemed clad in a striped stuff like linen.

This sight transfixed me, and I stood rooted to the spot in a bewildered sort of terror till it passed away I cannot tell how, and I saw Bertha lying on the carpet near the window.

This discovery gave me strength to throw off the fright, and I had lifted her up and carried her out into the lighted hall before I took time to draw a full breath.

She was only partially conscious and seemed incapable of supporting herself, so still half carrying her I got her up into her own chamber and laid her on the bed. It was not so dark in that room, the hall light and the street lamp made it sufficiently clear to see the objects around, and I went to the dressing-case to get some matches. The ornamental box that always stood there was empty, and I ran down-stairs to the dining-room and returned as quickly as I possibly could; lighting them on the box as I came. Just as I reached the top stair I heard a faint scream and saw my sister come staggering toward me.

Before we could meet she had fainted again, and I was almost beside myself with alarm and distress. I wonder now that I did not call Miss Leonie or Bab, but some inexplicable feeling restrained me, and I made the chamber as light as I could and again carried my sister into it and tried to revive her.

She came to her consciousness sighing deeply, and when I found that she was able to speak and understand me, I asked what had caused her terror, and tried to assume a calm, soothing manner toward her.

She looked around as if endeavoring to collect her scattered ideas, stopped and thought deeply until her delicate brown were knitted with the intensity of the effort, and then said simply and provokingly, "I cannot remember anything, it is all a blank since we sat down-stairs at the window together."

I knew that everything further said about it would only awaken her alarm, and therefore I controlled my own feelings as well as I could, and gave her a good dose of some sleeping powders the doctor had ordered when she was first taken ill.

I had no idea they were so powerful or I should have been more cautious in administering them. Bertha had no sooner got her hair arranged than she began to nod, and I had to make short work of the rest of her night toilet. She had scarcely laid down in her bed before she was sleeping soundly.

I had forgotten about our plan of sleeping together in my room. Bertha had got into her bed, and being now asleep there, I could not think of waking her to make a change.

Yet I did not quite like the idea of lying alone either, and Bertha's room in spite of its bright light looked too gloomy and too full of that terrible woman's picture to tempt me to remain in it with her.

I opened the communicating doors between our chambers and sat down to read just within the threshold of my own room. I did this with a firm determination to stop thinking of the figure that had frightened me in the parlor until I should grow calmer and more reasonable about it. I did not find the volume interesting, which was owing to my going over the words of each page without receiving a shadow of their meaning. At last I came to the conclusion that I was only making myself more nervous by the effort, and had laid down my book and began to loosen my hair, when I heard a quick decided step pass out of Bertha's room and cross the hall toward the stairs. It sounded exactly like Bab's, and I became exultant at the discovery.

"That girl is trying to frighten us," I thought, and I tip-toed out after her with all the haste and secrecy I could assume, determined to catch her in the act. The gas was lowered, and I had to hold by the balustrade as a guide, yet I heard the descending steps plainly, though I could not see Bab's figure in advance of me. However, I followed the sound until it was lost in one of the lower rooms, I could not tell which, for the doors were all closed when I reached them, and yet I had not heard a sound like the turning of a handle or the creaking of a hinge.

Bab's room was at the further end of the extension, and just above the kitchen; the thought struck me that I would go there at once, and in that way catch her in her pranks, for by this time I had quite decided that it was she who was amusing herself by frightening us.

I made all the haste I could in getting up the back stairs, and groping my way along the narrow passage leading to her door, but all within was dark, and only when I had called a half-dozen times did I receive a sleepy answer from her bed at the other end of the room.

"Can you get me a light, Bab?"

"Yes, Miss Mary, but what is the matter? is Miss Ferry sick?" she asked in an anxious voice as she jumped up and felt around for matches. The light showed her in her usual night-dress, and not an article out of place in her room. The dress she had worn hung from a peg at the foot of her bed and her underclothes lay across a chair, but no striped linen was in sight anywhere, and Bab must have been mistress of magic if those sleepy, surprised-looking eyes were deceptions.

I made a very shallow excuse about wanting a light in the kitchen, and not knowing where the matches were. Bab received it with an incredulous air, but gave me the matches and watched me down the kitchen stairs.

I did not stop an instant on the lower floor but hurried through the dining-room and up to my own chamber again, where I locked the door and went and looked at Bertha sleeping as if she never meant to wake any more. At first I thought I would just walk up and down till daylight, but after an hour had passed and everything continued quiet. I changed my mind and concluded to lie down awhile and keep my eyes open. But despite this resolved, they soon closed, and about midnight, as I suppose, I fell asleep.

I woke up suddenly—it seemed as if some one had shaken me into consciousness, it was so forced upon me. I lay still and found that my heart was beating violently, though I was not able to tell why, and after a little time I began to hear some one whispering close by my pillow, so close that my blood ran cold, and my flesh crept at the sound. There was one remarkable thing connected with it. I was quite near enough to detect words, but not one syllable was audible, only the tones of two distinct voices could be distinguished, and they rose and fell in an eager rasping way that was dreadful to follow without catching their meaning. At last one of the voices said, "I will, I will," and then again it uttered the audible words, "This night, before the day breaks," and then followed a low groan, faint and hopeless, as if it were the expression of exhausted dissent.

A cold, death-like air blew over me. I sprang up and saw that my door was open and the flutter of a striped skirt passing it. The faint, groaning sound seemed to remain close beside me, yet I heard the creaking of a loose board under the foot of the woman who went down, and in the awful stillness of the house the muffled sounds she made rose like startled ghosts. The dining-room door opened cautiously, and yet it creaked a little; then another door unclosed. Oh, how clear and still the air seemed, every whisper came up so distinctly as if it was uttered at my ear, and my blood curdled, and my flesh crept as I followed each sound.

The footsteps had crossed the dining-room and entered the small apartment which Bertha and I had explored that very day. They were pausing now, and an awful quiet reigned only broken by the low moan that came from my very side as it seemed. Even that fell away, and all the world seemed listening. A heaving, rustling sound rose toward me; something seemed to struggle and beat the air; there was a gurgling, gasping noise that died out, and came again in spasms, then a terrible silence followed, broken only once by a low, shuddering sigh that died out slowly, as if it bore a human life upon its tone.

I do not pretend to compute time correctly, but it seemed as if a great pause came after this, and then the steps moved about below, briskly but softly; and I heard other sounds as of shifting furniture. Whatever else it was that watched and waited in that room beside myself, now seemed to moan and shudder; what the woman had said she would do was done, and she was coming up again, her steps, as distinct and firm as any I ever heard, sounded on the stairs, and she drew nearer and nearer. I felt that I should die if I beheld her. I tried to shut my eyes, but a horrible fascination held them open, and she came to the doorway and looked in, the very woman of the picture, white-faced and hideous, with the frightful Cain-mark on her brow. I only needed one glance at that clenched hand to tell me it had done a murder. She held it up and nodded toward me with her teeth set in her under lip, and her eyes drawn hideously close together. Then she passed by, and I saw the striped dress cross my sister's threshold.

Whether it was this dreadful sight, or the sound of horror that echoed close beside me, I cannot tell, but sudden blindness smote my eyes and a convulsion like that of suffocation seized me. I fell back, and after that I knew no more until broad daylight shone into my room, and Bab and Bertha were bathing my head with ice water and consulting about sending for a physician.

"The idea of you being sick, Mary," cried Bertha, "you can't think how frightened I was to have Bab call me when I was dressing, and say that you really must be ill. She came up for the keys you know, and found you lying half out of bed, with your clothes on, and a wild look about your wide-open eyes. We tried to wake you and could not; and I'm so glad you've come to, and look all right again."

In the few moments that passed while Bab and she talked to me, I had determined for the present to keep my sister in ignorance of the real cause of the dreadful vigil I had held; so I did what I could to appear calm and rational, and attributed my miserable appearance to a nervous headache for which I had been obliged to take an anodyne. I got up and dressed as well as possible with the giddiness that made me feel as if I was whirling round and round every time I moved. I was so depressed that I could scarcely find spirit enough to speak, and Bertha insisted on my seeing the doctor at once. But I had another plan. I meant to go straight to Miss Van Artlandt and relate to her what I had seen, and request her co-operation in discovering the truth. If I had been deceived by a horrible dream I should thus dispel it, if Bab or any one else was practising on the *fears* of the household, I should have help to unravel the mischievous plot.

Bertha seemed delighted to find me stirring about again, and ran down with Bab to see that I had something warm for breakfast, that meal being over some time before. I put on the dress I had worn during my first day in the house, and drew out the bit of striped linen from its pocket. As I looked at it my blood chilled, for it was exactly like the dress worn by the woman with the portrait's face. I locked Bertha's door and ran to the wardrobe. In a moment I had pulled every dress off the pins, and was sounding the boards at the back. *They were hollow*, and I was looking about for something to pry them open with, when I found that they moved easily, sliding backward behind the shelves, showing a recess a few inches deep, in which hung the loose striped gown that had fluttered my very senses out of me, and even now as I touched it made my flesh creep and my heart stand still.

There was a pocket in it, and in that pocket a folded sheet of stiff paper, which I opened.

It was headed, "Leonie, my daughter!" and I read only the line that followed—"This is to you from your dying mother—" then I stopped and put the things quickly in place, and concealed the dress, for I heard Bertha coming. I affected to be a great deal better, and begged my sister to ride out and do a little shopping for me, saying that I needed the articles very much, and had so much to do that I really could not spare the time to go after them. It was not difficult to deceive the dear little soul. She had been quite alarmed about me, and was so pleased at my recovery, that leaving me over my late breakfast, she went off to attend to my imaginary necessities in good spirits.

As soon as I heard her close the hall door, I jumped up and sent Bab for Miss Leonie. She came down in her usual sable garments, and I begged her to go into the parlor with me, which she did without question, though I fancied she turned pale as she looked at me out of those sadly wistful eyes of hers.

I had hidden the dress under the piano-cover; I produced it, and she started at the sight and grew so terribly white that I began to soften my communication as well as I could, out of pity.

"Miss Van Artlandt, pray forgive me if I distress you by what I am going to say. I wish I could avoid it, but I am alone here with my sister—an invalid as you see—and I feel that it is necessary, though not pleasant. Did you not have reason to know there was some peculiar influence in your house before you tried to rent it?"

"I do not know; that is, I feared—" she faltered and took hold of the back of an easy chair, over which she leaned, and never raised her eyes again while we spoke.

"Did you ever see this dress before?"

"No, not actually. I imagined I saw something like it—"

"At night; moving round the house in the likeness of your mother?"

"Yes, yes!" she moaned, and her head sank lower, and her voice was full of agony.

"Did you know where it was concealed?"

"No; I did not know it existed."

"Listen to me, and then you can do as you think best. I have sent my sister away that no one but us two should share in the terrible knowledge forced on me last night."

And then I began and told her all about the figure that had stood between Bertha and me in that very parlor after twilight, and how I had followed the footsteps and gone over to Bab's room suspecting her. At this point she interrupted me, hastily, by raising her hand, though her face was averted, and saying passionately:

"No, no, not poor Bab, do not blame the innocent child!"

She stopped herself suddenly, and I went on to describe the sights and sounds of the rest of the night.

As I ceased speaking she gradually sank lower and lower till she dropped prone on the carpet behind the chair, but she did not utter a sound. I took out the letter and held it toward her, and though her eyes were hidden she raised her hand and took it.

A silence, that seemed infinite, fell upon the room. A sunbeam lay upon the carpet between us, and the motes danced in it mockingly, while I stood cold and sick at heart, and she lay at my feet like a victim, though, in reality, Bertha and I were the sufferers by coming in contact with the weird and terrible influence of her life.

I grew a little impatient of the wretchedness of my false position, even while I pitied her sincerely.

"Miss Van Artlandt," I said, "you confess that you knew this house to be the scene of some mysterious development before we entered it, you therefore know that we are totally innocent, and unhappily involved in it, and will not blame me if I remove my sister at once from its influence without waiting for my brother's return."

She murmured, "No, no! how could I?" but did not raise her head.

I waited a little longer, but finding that some deeper feeling than I could fathom swayed the poor girl, and that, however the conflict it occasioned might end, a stranger's presence could only embarrass her, I quietly withdrew, and, going up-stairs, began packing Bertha's things and my own, preparatory to returning to the hotel; for though I felt doubtful on some points, of this I was sure, that never again should I in my sober senses consent to pass another night under that roof.

I had just succeeded in undoing all I had done so nicely about ten days before, and having shut and fastened down the last trunk lid, was preparing for Bertha's astonishment and a modified explanation, when my sister entered, followed by Miss Leonie and Bab. Bertha was flushed with exercise and quite cheerful.

"Certainly, come in, Miss Leonie," she said pleasantly. "Mary is here and quite at leisure to see you." Then turning to me with a look of surprise she added, "Miss Van Artlandt has something important to say to us it seems."

I really cannot now say how long a time had passed since I left Miss Leonie in the parlor, but she seemed to have lived ages. All the wistful sadness was gone from her eyes, and the mournful languor had left her manner. A hard, strong purpose marked her white face, every muscle in it seemed set like curves in marble, and her voice fell like a metallic ring as she spoke.

"Mrs. Ferry, I want you and Miss Barton to do me the favor of witnessing what I am about to say; my friend Barbara Murray here is good enough to allow me to arrange a very important business with her in this private manner, thus rendering unnecessary the publicity and delay of law, which to solitary women like us would be very unpleasant. Barbara's father and mine were partners I have just learned, and Mr. Murray was a man of considerable wealth, though very economical tastes. My father's share in the firm was much diminished by his mining speculations, which had become a passion with him, and in which he indulged beyond prudence, so that even this house became Mr. Murray's property, and from a partner my father was forced to descend to a working agent for his late associate, who being totally without education, was dependent on him to keep all accounts and do all his writing. Mr. Murray stayed here when not on business in the mines, and his dislike to display or elegance can be seen in his choice of that little room below, where last night seven years ago *he died suddenly of apoplexy without any will or business settlement*. My father took charge of everything, and has been very fortunate in his stewardship. My mother sent for Barbara, Mr. Murray's only child, whom he chose to bring up in the plainest and most economical way as part of his peculiar whim, and my mother adopting his idea carried it out. It does not signify now, her own is returned with interest, and she must in its enjoyment strive to forget the delay. I was absent at school in Brussels, where I remained until six months before my mother's death. I came here to find my father suffering under a terrible disease of the brain, the consequence of too intense application to business. His mind being painfully affected, my mother allowed no one to attend him but herself. He was confined in the room occupied by Miss Barton, and two weeks from the day he expired my mother died in a fit induced by fright. Her nerves were unstrung, and she saw Bab come out of her father's room in the twilight, when she supposed the door to have been locked for years. She screamed and fell in a spasm on the dining-room floor; then we carried her up here, but she never spoke again.

"It was to break up the gloom of this great blow and to scatter the silly fancies that followed it, that I advertised the house and made the arrangement with your family. I did not then know that it belonged to Miss Murray, to whom I have this morning surrendered everything, preparatory to a quiet legal transfer. She generously proposes to lend me money to return to Brussels, where I am sure of a teacher's place in my old school, and will receive my written agreement to repay it in and during the next year."

"Oh, that is all her plan," cried Bab in an outburst, "she's welcome to half and more than welcome, and I'll never take a cent if I can help it unless she keeps a full half. I knew the whole thing before I'd been here a year, but I waited to see it work itself out, and I never was in the least hurry, nor I ain't now. She"—here Bab jerked her head in the direction of the female portrait—"never knew what comfort was, watching him," here she indicated the gentleman's picture, "and he lived and died groaning. They couldn't rest, but I was sure it would come round right, only I won't take all now, that's flat."

Miss Leonie's cold face never moved, she listened with deference to Bab's rapid disclaimer, and then turned again to us—begging our pardon for the painful experience she had thrust on us, and repeating that she hoped we understood the abnegation she made in her friend's favor.

Then she went quietly away, having made each a cold but humble courtesy, and I felt we should never look on her face again; nor did we, and we afterwards heard of no Bab that her resolution could not be moved in the smallest particle.

We went directly back to the hotel, where George, a month later, found a party of three waiting his return from San Luis—a dear little mite of a frightened-looking baby having been added to our small family circle a week before—of whom I was almost as much afraid as of the ghost in the striped dress, it looked so tiny and fragile; but Bertha was the proudest and happiest of mothers, and as for George he considered it a perfect wonder—and so in some respects it was.

Bertha was soon well, and had grown strong, (and it was really a marvel how quickly she recovered) before I told her the story of that night of the twenty-first of November; but although we have talked of it over and over again, she and George and I, we never rightly understood it all, and that is the truth.

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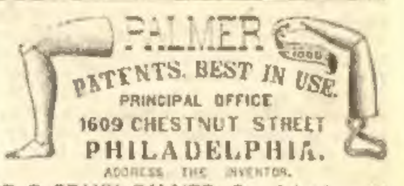

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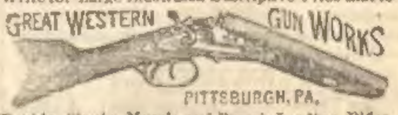
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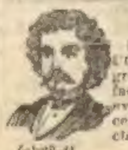
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WIT AND HUMOR.

BARNUM'S GORILLA—A TOUCHING TRIBUTE TO HIS MEMORY.
From One Who Knew Him Well.

It is seldom that we are called upon to note a more painful fact than that which we now record, and which is nothing more nor less than the rumored death of Barnum's gorilla, who is supposed to have perished in the flames of the Museum recently consumed. The news of his untimely and frightful end will cause a feeling of heartfelt agony to thrill the bosoms of his many friends throughout the country, who witnessed his playful antics in his cages wherever Barnum went on his last summer's tour or enjoyed his society at a beer saloon when the labors of the day and evening's exhibitions were ended.

The deceased gorilla was a young man of exemplary habits, and by his versatile industry supported an aged father and mother in Jersey City, who can hardly bear their present loss. His original name was Briggs, and he was of Yankee, not Celtic, origin, as has been erroneously stated. Mr. Barnum became acquainted with young Briggs many years ago, and keen observer of human nature that he is, he soon saw that the boy possessed talents which would, if rightly applied, bring him into notice. Mr. Barnum first employed Briggs as a mermaid, but his nervous sanguineous temperament unfitted him for wearing a wig and cod-fish skin, and he was shortly after promoted to the position of a wild man. In this he achieved no success, and it was not until Barnum put his great travelling show on the road in 1870, and gave Briggs the position of gorilla, that he developed those eccentricities that have made him famous. For two years no better specimen of the gorilla tribe has been seen on this continent. Though naturally convivial and social in his tastes, he has sat in his cage an object of wonder and admiration to thousands, and submitted to being stirred up with a long pole for the benefit of country clergymen, who stood by explaining to their youthful Sabbath-school scholars how fearfully and wonderfully we are made. No murmur of discontent ever escaped his lips, except at Terre Haute, Indiana, last July, when he was heard to remark that he'd be hanged if he could stand it much longer wearing a hair overcoat in hot weather, on a salary of ten dollars a week, and he was allowed ice in his den thereafter, and no better behaved specimen of his tribe was ever placed on exhibition.

Mr. Barnum, we are informed, with characteristic energy has telegraphed to Africa for other specimens of rare wild beasts, to supply the places of those destroyed by the late conflagration. He may procure elephants, lions, tigers and cockatoos, but he can never fill the place of Gorilla Briggs. Not even Dr. Livingstone, with all his experience in African jungles, can capture so fine a specimen, one who could caper so nimbly around his seven by nine cage, and dance to the lascivious ticklings of his keeper's club with such patience. Gorilla, adieu! and may the hairy four-legged Phœnix who arises from your ashes possess your noble qualities of mind and heart, and give entire satisfaction to a deluded public for the usual price of half a dollar.

ELI PERKINS ON DEFECTIVE FLUES.

It pains me to hear of so many people being burned, on account of elevators and defective flues. The other day I laid a plan before the Fire Inspectors, which, if carried out, will remedy the evil.

When I called on the Inspector of Buildings, Mr. McGregor was trying some experiments with Professor Tyndall. They were trying to abstract the heat from the fire, so as to leave the fire perfectly harmless, while the heat is to be carted off in flour-barrels to supply cooking-stoves. Then they tried experiments in concentrating water, to be used in the engines in case of a drouth. The latter experiment proved eminently successful. Twelve barrels of water were evaporated down to a gill, and this was sealed in a small phial, to be diluted and used to put out fires in cases where no Croton water can be had. In some cases the water is to be evaporated and concentrated till it becomes a fine dry powder, and this can be carried around in the vest-pocket of the firemen, and is to be blown upon the fire through tin horns—that is, it is to extinguish the fire in a horn.

I examined the powderized water with great interest; took a horn—in my hands—and proceeded to elucidate my plan for constructing fire-flues. I then told them how the holes of the flues should be constructed of solid cast-iron or other non-combustible material, and then cold corrugated iron, without any apertures, poured around them.

"Wonderful!" exclaimed Professor Tyndall and Mr. McGregor in a breath. "but where will you place the flues, Mr. Perkins?"

"My idea," I replied, drawing a diagram on the wall-paper with a piece of charcoal, "is to have these flues in every instance located in the adjoining house."

"Magnificent! but how about the elevators?"

"Why, after putting them in the next house too, I'd seal them up water-tight and fill them with cotton and let it freeze. Then I'd turn them bottomside up, and if they caught fire the flames would only draw down them into the cellar."

A GOAT STORY.

A retired clergyman sends us an account of a little affair that happened in his place. It appears that there was a young woman, a fine-spirited girl, engaged at a wash-tub, opposite an open door. Just behind her was a young man, as is generally the case, and in the yard was an old buck that was allowed the freedom of the premises, which is not always the case, we are glad to say. Well, this buck came up to the door and looked in, and the young man going close behind the young woman, pointed his finger straight to the buck, and the old fellow recognizing at once the pressing character of this mute invitation, put down his head and dashed forward, and the miserable man stepped one side and fled, and the young woman, all unconscious of the arrangements, received the awful shock without warning and passed over the tub, and the air for an instant appeared to be full of slippers and wet clothes and hot water and suds. And the next minute that goat came flying out the door at a dreadful speed, bald the whole length of his spine and with a wild look in his eye. And for an hour afterward he stood back of the barn, scratching his chin, and trying to recall all the circumstances in the unfortunate affair. —*Danbury News.*

A CANINE SENSATION.

The Terre Haute Express says: A great sensation was produced on Main street, yesterday afternoon, by a small but ambitious dog who wore no apparel but a tin can looped gracefully to his tail. The canine moved with the fleetness of the wind—"of the northwest wind, Keewaydin"—along the sidewalk. One honest burgher was treated as though he were a Colossus of Rhodes, the dog passing between his legs. A tender maiden, a bright and airy thing, weighing only 190 pounds, was toppled into the gutter. Business was suspended, as it were. Men smiled approvingly, and the juvenile population shed tears of delight. No one knows where the dog stopped. He is not registered at any city hotel. He may be running yet.

CONSTANTINE.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,
BY DAISY BURNS.

It was a pretty scene, the roseate tints of the setting sun had just touched the steeple of the old brick church, sinking, as it were, into the golden clime beyond; the tree-tops even glowed with a yellowish tinge.

"It was an hour of beauty made
For the young heart's impassioned mood,"

and the great stone mansion of the wealthy Mobrays stood back in its sombre grandeur with a seeming admiration for the beauty of the scene.

Lorena Mobray and Aumerle St. Clair sat on the steps of the piazza watching the close of day. She was pretty, with a petite and childlike figure, a fair bright face, and a pair of lovely blue eyes with a soft, dreamy expression.

He was tall, with a finely-shaped head covered with a mass of brown curls, a pair of mischievous brown eyes, but minus a beard. They had been lovers all their lives and now he was twenty-three, and she seventeen; when she became eighteen she was to be made his wife. Lorena was not only poetical in her notions but very romantic; and when, previous to this evening, her mother had received an invitation to visit a cousin who lived some distance from them, Rena, after ascertaining her relation lived in a wild, rocky region of country, took it upon herself to accept the invitation declined by her mother. Her father had made all arrangements to gratify this whim of his spoiled daughter, and on the next day she was to leave; this somewhat accounted for the sadness of the little maiden's face, for she loved Merle with her whole heart, and parting from him for three months was a little harder than she had imagined.

"And Birdie, you will go?" said the lover fastening a rosebud in her hair.

"Yes," she replied, "I'm tired of the city; I long for a little change. Who knows but something romantic may occur among those rocks; at least, I may meet with some one who will not say 'nonsense' when I talk about poetry or romance."

"It's a pity you don't love a poetical man, I'm so—"

"No, you're not," she said, slipping her hand in his. "I do get mad when you laugh at my quotations and verses," for Rena had often tried to outdo Tennyson with her own composition, "but," she continued, "you shall not call my lover names. Are you not afraid you will forget me during these months of absence."

"No, true love, like mine, never forgets; and you, Birdie?"

"Oh," she said—

"'The mountain rill
Seeks with no surer flow the far bright sea,
Than my unchanged affections fl w to thee,'"

and while Merle pressed kiss after kiss upon her little jewelled hand, murmuring, "Sweet Rena, dear Rena," and such nonsense, she continued—

"'I have no hope that does not dream of thee,
I have no joy that is not shared with thee.'

"Do you suppose you will ever give me a thought?" he asked

"Why, yes—

"'I will think of thee when the star
That lit our own fair river,
Shines in the blue sky from afar
As beautiful as ever.'

"There you are laughing at me again. I do wish you appreciated my poetical tastes."

"Never mind, I'll know all your poems by heart when you get back, if you ever do; I fear you will meet some kindred romantic spirit among the rocky cliffs who will appreciate your—"

"You always have to ridicule me," said the spoiled girl with a pout of her full red lip.

"Well don't let us quarrel on this last evening," he said. "I won't see you again, and as I have an engagement must leave you. Take care of my little girl and keep her heart true to me," he kissed her, then left her alone in the twilight.

* * * * *

Lorena had been at her cousin's for several weeks, when we find her one day sitting with her hat in her hand ready for a walk. She had just been thinking of Merle and telling her cousin of his many noble qualities when Tom, a lad of fifteen and about sixty-fourth cousin to Rena came flying into the room.

"Oh! Rena, there's just the splendidest man down-town you ever did see. Golly, how the girls, too, peep at him."

"A stranger! Oh, how nice," exclaimed Rena. "Tom, where's he from? How does he look? What's his name? and—"

"I don't know where he's from, nor what his name is, but I do know he's got big eyes, black hair and whiskers; wears a cap, box-coat, black pants, white socks—"

"Now, Tom!"

"He's an artist, and sketching."

"I do wish I could see him. I love to look at handsome men. But, Tom, come go walking with me. I want you to show me that mill and moss-covered cliff you were telling me about the other day."

So Tom, ever ready to gallant, accompanied her. They walked for some time through gulleys and over rocks, and after climbing four or five fences, reached the mill. It was a picturesque scene; the old, dilapidated saw-mill standing foremost, the great moss-covered cliff just beyond; the bank of rocks behind, with now and then a bunch of fern or wild flowers peeping out from between the crevices; and last, but not least, the old bridge, so gloomy in its appearance. Rena threw herself at the foot of a pile of rocks and watched a little spray of water trickle down by its side. No doubt, if she had had pencil and paper, she would have gone to composing verses right away; as it was, she exclaimed:

"How lovely! Oh, Tom, I could sit forever and gaze upon this picturesque scene. Could not you?"

"Lord a mercy, no," said the practical Tom. "You don't catch me sitting in the same place forever, though I could stay a good bit if I had a lot of fishing worms, for I tell you what, Rena—"

"Oh, Tom, what was that?" asked Rena, as a sound much resembling a smothered laugh caught her ear.

"Oh, I see, Rena," said Tom, pulling her sleeve; "yonder he goes—that artist—he's been here behind these rocks sketching."

"No wonder he laughed—the idea of one thinking of fishing worms in such a spot," said Rena.

"Say, mister," called Tom, running after the artist, "won't you please let me have that book to show Rena them pictures?"

"Certainly, certainly, sir," replied the artist, turning his handsome face toward Rena. "I will take pleasure in showing the sketches to the young lady myself."

"Tom, you should not have troubled the gentleman," said Rena, as the stranger bowed and sat down by her side, "you are so rude." Then she looked up at the gentleman and started. "Why, how like Merle!" she exclaimed.

"And who is Merle?" he asked.

"Oh, that's her jularky," broke in Tom, who was intent upon getting out the pictures. "He lives up yonder in New York, and spends money like fingeons. She's got his picture, too; but he ain't nigh so handsome as you—is he, Rena?"

"Oh, Tom, you talk too much," Rena said, blushing. "Your eyes," she continued, turning to the stranger, "remind me of an old friend; but he had brown hair and no whiskers."

"Speaking of eyes, lady, you have such beautiful ones—

"'Those calm, pure, holy eyes,
Their piercing sweetness wanders through my dreams.'"

"Sir, I dislike flattery," though the tell-tale blush contradicted her; "besides, you never saw these eyes before."

"Caught, sure," he said to himself, "but trust a woman for that." Then aloud—"I mean they are the eyes I have dreamed of." Then he drew out his pictures one by one, giving the name and history of each sketch, often quoting a verse or so of poetry for explanation.

"Oh, how beautiful!" exclaimed Rena as she drew out one and looked admiringly upon it.

"That," he explained, "is the Child of the Sea, taken from one of Miss Landon's poems;" and forthwith he began to repeat that lengthy poem, which delighted Rena. In the midst of the tale, whether from lack of memory or want of breath we know not, the artist said suddenly, "I fear I weary you—I—"

"I'm awful tired," said Tom, beginning to yawn. "Rena, let's go."

So Rena replaced the sketches and arose, and as the artist had to pass right by Tom's home, he walked along with them.

"Would you mind telling a fellow your name?" asked Tom, abruptly, of the stranger.

"Why, no, not such a fellow as you; my name is Alfonso Constantine."

"Gee—whilakens—whoo—!"

"Tom!" said Rena, reprovingly.

"Well, my name's Tom Mobray," said Tom; "and this is my cousin, Rena Mobray, from New York; and now, as we all know each other, I think 'twould be fine if you'd stop and stay to supper with us, and play a game or so of croquet with me and Rena."

We presume Alfonso Constantine thought it would be equally as nice as Tom did, for when they reached the farm-house he accompanied them in, and remained until late. And this was the commencement.

Alfonso Constantine was a poor man, and supported himself by painting pictures. He travelled through the country making pencil sketches, then returned to the city, painted and sold them. He had been banished from his home when quite young, on account of a quarrel with his older brother, who was his father's favorite; and thus he was thrown out upon his own resources.

No wonder Rena pitied him. Poor Constantine! She soon began to take great interest in his sketches, and almost daily he, she and Tom could be seen strolling through the woods in search of beautiful scenery.

Poor Constantine loved poetry, too; another favor in Rena's eyes; and though he quoted it as a school-boy repeats his speech, she thought it splendid. Well, woman's fidelity is proverbial; but after all, we are but mortal. 'Tis said "absence makes the heart grow fonder," but I think it a mistake. I believe "that once out of sight, you are soon out of mind." I would advise all lovers to be absent no longer than can be helped; and Aumerle St. Clair was very silly to remain absent from Lorena for so long a time. Three months soon expired, yet Rena lingered, and so did the artist. He was her shadow; when she went out, he escorted her; when she was at home, he was with her, reading, singing, repeating lines from their favorite poets. She was enchanted. Merle was forgotten, and the poor, deluded girl thought of, dreamed of no one but poor, dear Constantine. Constantine was so handsome, he loved her dearly, too—yes, he had told her so; true, he was but a poor artist, yet she loved him all the more.

She sat hovering over the fire one chilly November evening, when Constantine stepped in.

"Lorena," he said, sitting beside her and looking dolefully in the fire, "they refuse their consent, and say you are to return home immediately." The fact was, Constantine had written to Mr. Mobray begging the hand of his daughter, and received a refusal.

"Oh, my darling," broke forth the artist, bending on his knee and catching both her hands, "you love me; fly and be happy with me."

Now, of all things, to run away to marry had been the greatest desire of Rena's heart, as far back as she could remember, consequently it required but little persuasion on the artist's part to induce her to fly. So one cold, sleety night she met her lover at the garden gate, and was soon with him in a closed carriage, rumbling away in the darkness. After a time she began to sob.

"What is it, darling?" asked the happy lover, wrapping her shawl closer around her.

"I want Merle; I don't want to marry you. Oh—oh—oh."

"Don't you love me?"

"Yes—no—no. Oh, dear—"

"There, don't cry; you'll soon be my wife, then we'll be happy forever more."

She ceased her sobs, fell asleep on Constantine's shoulder, and awoke not until the carriage stopped before a little brick house, about the dawn of day.

"Where am I?" she asked, rubbing her eyes; then, as if recollecting it all, she began again to sob; and then a little, gray-haired man met and led them into the house, where a blazing fire awaited them.

TRUE TACT.

Mrs. Silvertongue (who has been chatting most agreeably to Mr. Wilkes for the last two hours—"Oh, don't talk to me of ugly men, Mr. Wilkes! I make a point of *never even speaking to one!*"

[Mr. Wilkes, who is rather sick of being told by women that they on the whole object to good looks in the male sex, appreciates the remark immensely.]

"A young bride should not weep," said the old man.

"I'm not a bride. I don't want to be his wife—oh, oh, oh, I've been so silly and foolish, just let me go home to Merle, dear Merle," said the miserable girl, beginning to realize what she was doing.

"You don't love this fellow then?" said the old man, pointing to Constantine.

"No, no, I love nobody but Merle."

"Then I'd pull this fellow's hair if I were you."

"It wasn't his fault—I—I—"

"Then I'll pull it if you won't," and straightway the old man marched up to poor dear Constantine and gave his hair such a pull, that not only his hair but whiskers and moustache all came off, leaving to Rena's bewildered gaze the brown curls and smooth face of Aumerle St. Clair.

"Oh, Merle!" and she threw herself into his arms. "What does it mean?" she asked, while the old man laughed heartily.

"Why, you see," said Merle, "I could not stay away from you, so I put on the garb of a poor artist, sought and won you again. Oh, fickle woman!"

"Forgive me—I've been so miserable for the last hour—oh, forgive me, and I'll never do so again."

"That you won't, for you'll be my wife soon—then let me catch any artists quoting poetry to my wife."

"How *did* you manage all that poetry, Merle?"

"Oh, I studied night and day, and with Uncle Joe's help here got on pretty well. I almost broke down sometimes."

"Oh, Merle, I'm so glad it's you."

"Poor dear Constantine!"

"Promise never to mention that name again, and I'll never repeat another verse, or breathe the word romance as long as I live," but he didn't promise, and now, though they have been married for years, he sometimes teases her about poor dear Constantine and her runaway match.

The Newburyport Mystery Solved.

THE SCHOOL-HOUSE GHOST.

The Boston Post says: "The extraordinary manifestations in the Newburyport (Mass.) school-house have at last been accounted for. The strange and unnatural sounds, the nimble spectre, the yielding pegs and the unruly doors and blinds, have all been discovered to be but the tricks of the mischievous boys who sat on the school-house benches. The committee appointed to investigate the matter, after a close examination of the school-house and hearing the testimony of the scholars, report that the whole matter can be accounted for without any spiritual ratiocination. A number of boys state that they have played ghost, and that while doing so they have been accustomed to cover their faces with a white cloth, in order that they might not be detected. They used to get up into the attic and look down the ventilator, and then go down and peep in at the windows. The teacher chased them with a broom-stick, and they used to slip away from her and disappear around some corner. Another pair of mischievous boys state that they were frequently in the cellar of the building, and that they used to come out in all manner of fantastic rigs in order to frighten the girls in the adjacent school. It was discovered, too, that the boys were well supplied with elastic cord and other ingeniously-contrived apparatus for playing their tricks, and that spikes and cords were conveniently arranged in the school-building for their diablerie. The committee conclude that, after deducting the stories about the school that have been set afloat, there isn't enough left to make a ghost."

☞ A wife having lost her husband, was inconsolable. "Leave me to my grief!" she cried, sobbing; "you know the extreme sensibility of my nerves—a mere nothing upsets them!"

☞ An absent-minded gentleman, writing a letter at the breakfast-table, dipped his pen in his coffee and continued his letter. Noticing his mistake, he put a lump of sugar in the ink, and then finding his second blunder, poured the contents of the inkstand into the coffee-pot to set it all right.

Answers to Correspondents.

PAY YOUR POSTAGE.—Authors and others often send us letters and manuscripts not fully paid. In these cases the Department here enforces payment of the deficiency—which we either have to pay, or to decline receiving the letters or manuscripts. Authors will also bear in mind that the Department now requires letter postage on all manuscripts—therefore it is often cheaper, as it is always safer, to send large packages by express.

I. H. C., (Clifton, W. Va.,) writes: "I wish to ask you a few questions. Did the Soldiers' Land Bounty Bill pass both Houses of Congress? Under that act, is the soldier entitled to 160 acres of Government land, and is he entitled to a deed by paying taxes on the same, without cultivating?" The bill referred to passed the House of Representatives only. A report in reference to it has just been made by a Committee of the Senate, taking strong ground against its passage, the principal reasons being that there is scarcely enough fertile public land left to satisfy the provisions of the bill, and that it would be of but slight benefit to the soldiers generally, as it would take many years to survey and locate so many claims. Also that it would negative the action of the Homestead Law.

J. J. writes: "Please tell me through the Post where I can get the book called 'Parturition without Pain.' Also, please tell me the price." It was published by Wood & Holbrook, of the Herald of Health, New York city, whom you had better write to. We believe the suggestions of the book are worth trying.

MARAH, (Oak Hill, Pa.,) writes: "1st. Have postmasters or postmistresses any right to open the papers and magazines which pass through their hands, or to open bundles and packages (which have full postage paid on them) sufficiently to gratify *idle curiosity*, to which I attribute it? 2d. Since ladies like to be fashionable, what do you think of my handwriting and composition? You have had frequent specimens of both, and we consider those our best friends who tell us of our faults. 3d. It is said that some persons can read a stranger's character and disposition by their writing. Who so well calculated to do so as you, who have had such long experience in deciphering all kinds of hieroglyphical characters and such excellent opportunities of studying human nature? See if you can do so in the present instance, and if the portrait resembles the original I will let you know." 1st. They have no such right. If you are satisfied that they do so, you should make complaint to the Postoffice Department at Washington. 2d. Your handwriting and composition are both good. We would gratify you by telling you of your faults if we saw any decided ones. 3d. We have heard that claim made by several persons, but have seen no marked evidence of their ability, except where they had some previous knowledge of the person. Of course, a strongly individualized handwriting contains some evidences of the writer's character, but this kind of evidence is not generally to be relied on. Hence we must decline drawing your portrait.

J. W. H., (Rotan, Pa.,) asks: "If a tube fifty feet long be placed in a perpendicular position and filled with water, and a continual supply of water be added, we know it possesses great force and power. But suppose at the base of this tube another tube is connected, and runs for five hundred feet in a horizontal position. After the water passes the length of this last tube will its force or power be lessened? Or will it run as much machinery at the end of the horizontal tube as it will at the base of the upright one?" No. It has work to do within the tube which will diminish its exterior work. This work is the friction of the flowing water with the sides of the tube. The same quantity of water will perform the same quantity of work, but will not flow through the tube in the same time.

JAMES P. (Fairfield, Illinois,) writes: "Please answer the following questions, viz: Can a person learn civil engineering without a teacher? What books would be necessary, and the cost of instruments? 2d. Is Pitman's method of phonography the one in general use? Where can the reporter's phrase book and readers be procured, and cost of same? Is there a phonographic magazine published now? That old question, how is my writing?" 1st. Anything can be learned without a teacher, with sufficient time, talent and perseverance. But many studies are very difficult without instruction from without, and we think you might find it most economical in the end to employ a teacher. 2d. It may be most generally used in England, but we believe not in this country. It and Graham's are each good manuals. You had better write to J. B. Lippincott & Co., of this city. We do not think the magazine mentioned is published now. Your writing is very good.

W. T. GORDEN, (Rotan, Pa.,) writes: "Having recently taken an interest in the correspondents' column of the Post, I respectfully request that you may do me the favor of answering a number of foolish questions I may ask. 1st, Being a young man of twenty-one years of age I sometimes have serious thoughts in regard to matrimony; but as I am in a manner penniless, pa thinks I had better wait awhile. What think you? 2d. When a gentleman calls upon a lady to spend an evening is it true politeness in her to invite him back again? 3d. If two bodies of like shape and material, but of different weights, were let fall from a great height would they both reach the earth at once? 4th. If it were possible to drop a ball into a hole passing from side to side of the earth through the centre, where would it find a stopping point? 5th. What gave rise to and what is the meaning of the popular saying, all O. K.? 6th. When and where was the first railroad built? 7th. A young friend of mine is desirous of facilitating the growth of his moustache. What will effect the desired result? 8th. In what order are the mental faculties developed? 9th. What is the origin of Ground Hog Day? 10th. Who were the Seven Sleepers? 11th. Who, what, when (or what shall I ask), is Grotna Green? 12th. What think you of the marriage of a couple, groom twenty, bride eighteen? Is it not rather young? 13th. On submitting a question for debate is it proper to say: 'Resolved' of the proper name Las Casas? 15th. Were there ever so and so, or not? 14th. What is the pronunciation any fifty-cent gold piece coined? If so, what was their shape? 16th. How far is Sing Sing prison situated from Grand Central Hotel, New York? 17th. Has the —— suspended publication? If so, when and why? 18th. Is there a publishing company in New York called ——? 19th. Please state the number of inhabitants of Bloomington, Illinois. 20th. Is rain water pure or not? 21st. Is the hair and whisker dye in common use, injurious to the person using it in any way? 22d. Is the following sentence correct: You set down and sit there? If not, give the correct construction. 23d. What of my orthography and grammar?" 1st. We think with "Pa." 2d. It depends on the circumstances. In some cases politeness might demand an invitation, in others not. 3d. Yes. The atmospheric resistance would be proportional to their momentum, and therefore would be overcome equally. 4th. If the opening were a perfect vacuum the ball would continue to swing backward and forward forever. If it were occupied by air, or any resisting medium, the ball would gradually lose its force and come to rest in the centre, after many backward and forward movements. 5th. It arose from some genius spelling "all correct" as follows: "Oll Korrect." The initials of this phrase give us O. K. 6th. The first railroad of the modern style of iron rails was built in 1789, at Loughborough, England. The first for the conveyance of passengers was the Stockton and Darlington, built in 1825. It was worked by horse power. 7th. We can recommend nothing better than constant shaving. 8th. Attention first appears after the display of instinctive motions. Then imitation. The child first begins to assort its many impressions, then to copy them in action. 9th. We do not know. 10th. Seven noble youths of Ephesus, who fled in the Decian persecution to a cave and were walled in. They fell asleep for two hundred years. Their bodies were then found and taken to Marseilles in a large stone coffin, which is yet shown at St. Victor's church. The story probably arose from the expression, "Fell asleep in the Lord," *i. e.*, died. 11th. A village in Scotland, near the borders, famous for the many irregular marriages which formerly took place there. This was on account of the laxity of the Scotch marriage laws as compared with those of England. 12th. Rather. 13th. Probably so. We are not well versed in debating society etiquette. 14th. Las Casas. 15th. We think there were 50 and 25 cent-pieces coined in California. They were kept more for curiosity than use. 16th. It is 33 miles from New York. We do not know how many extra feet and inches from any of the hotels. 17th and 18th. We do not know. 19th. About 1,500. 20th. Yes, very nearly so. It is sometimes affected by atmospheric impurities. 21st. Yes. Lead poisoning often results from the use of dyes. 22d. The sentence should be, "You sit down and continue to sit there." 23d. They are both very good.

DON, (Marion, Ill.,) asks: "Please answer the following questions: Where and for what price can I get a history of the Republican party? What do you think of my writing?" We do not know of any such history having been published. Your writing is very fair.

INFELIX, (Auburn, Ill.,) writes: "Will you please inform me, through your column of answers, who was Napoleon the Second? I dislike to display so lamentable an ignorance of French history; but so it is; I either never knew, else have quite forgotten, and can obtain no history in this place for reference. I know that the son of Napoleon I. was styled King of Rome, but am not aware that he was ever known as Napoleon II. 2d. I should be glad to know if my handwriting is sufficiently legible to admit of my writing for publication." He was so known, but not till after his death. Louis Napoleon, on his accession, wished to establish the fiction of an unbroken Napoleonic dynasty, and so the poor Duke of Reichstadt was dubbed Napoleon II., and himself Napoleon III. 2d. It is easily read, which is all that is required.

SUBSCRIBER, (Lastant, Ill.,) writes: "1st. Can you tell me how to make a solution of silver for plating the inferior metals, with a battery? 2d. Would you advise a young man of ordinary education, who is incapacitated by an ailment of the heart for farming, to seek some more sedentary occupation? 3d. Is telegraphing as profitable as it is interesting? 4th. Taking Greeley's handwriting at one hundred, what per cent. is mine?" 1st. To make the solution, take one part cyanide of silver, and two or three parts cyanide of potassium, which dissolve in about one hundred and fifty parts of water. Use the article to be plated for the negative, and a small piece of silver for the positive pole of the battery, suspended in the bath. 2d. Yes. It might prove best for his health. 3d. That depends on how interesting it is. Many operators, no doubt, consider it much more profitable than interesting. Good operators, in the large cities, are well paid. 4th. About one thousand, judging from our experience of that celebrated hand.

I. S. G., (Dalton, Ga.,) writes: "Will you please answer a few questions? 1st. Who was Shutram, what was his doom, and how did he conquer his doom? 2d. What is the dream of Arcadia? 3d. What was Queen Victoria's surname before marriage? Was William IV. her father? 4th. Was Wallace beheaded, or did he die as related in the Scottish Chiefs? 5th. What does an avenging Nemesis mean?" 1st. Shutram is the Greek hero of the German romance of that name, by Baron de la Motte Fouqué. The work is easily procurable. 2d. Arcadia was a division of ancient Greece. Its chief deity was Pan; its chief employment, agriculture and cattle raising. Hence the Pastoral poets selected it as the seat of their fables, making a paradise of a country which is very far from being one in reality. 3d. Guelph (pronounced Gwelf) is the family name of the present English dynasty. The father of Victoria was Edward, Duke of Kent, fourth son of George III. 4th. It will not do to rely on the Scottish Chiefs for historical accuracy. Wallace was executed in London in 1305. 5th. It means an avenging fate, or destiny. Nemesis was a Greek deity, the daughter of Nox. She was the Goddess of Vengeance, and was equally prepared to punish impiety and to reward the good and virtuous.

A. T. L., (Dewart, Pa.,) writes: "Will you please decide the following, for many of your readers: A goes into B's store to purchase a hat; buys one for five dollars and tenders B a fifty-dollar bill. B not having the change, goes to C, a broker, and gets change for the fifty-dollar bill, returns and gives A forty-five dollars and one hat valued at five dollars. C afterward finds that the bill is a counterfeit and worthless, and B has to redeem the bill with good money. How much did B lose in the transaction?" He loses forty-five dollars and one hat. In other words, he loses fifty dollars, less the profit on the hat. The man can lose in money only what he is out of pocket by the transaction.

[Several letters are held over to be answered in our next.]

RIDDLER.

Charades, Riddles, Problems, etc., must always be accompanied by their answers, or they will not be published.

All who take an interest in this column are respectfully invited to contribute.

HISTORICAL ENIGMA.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

I am composed of 39 letters.

My 26, 29, 30, 5, 39, was the name of a French painter of great distinction.

My 9, 3, 7, 12, 22, 2, 32, 35, 8, was the name of a governor of the British possessions in India, he was impeached for maladministration.

My 39, 14, 8, 19, 10, 33, 3, was the name of a celebrated French authoress.

My 6, 4, 15, 7, 24, is the name of a fortress in the United States, famous in the history of Texan independence.

My 23, 16, 21, 35, 11, 4, 2, 28, was the name of a celebrated American philosopher and statesman.

My 1, 2, 36, 18, 24, 38, was the name of a professor in the University of Edinburgh, Scotland, but is better known as the principal editor of Blackwood's Magazine and its chief contributor.

My 13, 8, 37, 19, 31, was the name of an illustrious Grecian philosopher.

My 35, 2, 24, 5, 28, was the name of a celebrated mathematician of Naples.

My 23, 17, 25, 39, 5, 28, 10, 32, 26, was the name of a King of Spain.

My 35, 17, 12, 3, 14, 20, was the name of a wicked governor of Switzerland who was killed by the celebrated William Tell.

My 6, 35, 20, 24, 32, was the name of the most noted of the Illyrian pirates.

My whole is the name and birthplace of a celebrated poet.

Seaboard, N. C. EUGENE.

ANAGRAMS.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

CITIES AND TOWNS IN WISCONSIN.

1st. Went to war.
2d. Ella V. Jenis.
3d. Fan conild.
4th. Eben Gray.
5th. Hank Eso.
6th. Race lose.
7th. Sue Prior.
8th. Lame Cola.
9th. Top gear.
10th. Paul E. Morta.

Helleville, Wis. JUNIUS.

DECAPITATIONS.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

1st. Behead a town in New York and leave a boy's name.

2d. Behead a country of Europe and leave anguish.

3d. Behead a river of Italy and leave a vowel.

4th. Behead a country of Europe and leave another.

5th. Behead a division of Germany and leave a town in Arabia.

6th. Behead a river in France, and leave a stone used for sharpening instruments.

Pottstown, Pa. RICHARDA.

WORD SQUARES.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

I.

A sphere.
To lament.
An insect.

II.

Death.
To weary.
A metal.
A pavilion. C. O.

BURIED TOWNS.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

1. Get my pencil lying on the desk.
2. Is language no adjunct to man.
3. Hemp is an article used in making ropes.

Fort Totten, D. T. NELOM.

ANSWERS TO LAST.

GEOGRAPHICAL ENIGMA.—Wertzel the Scout; or, The Phantom of the Black Hills.

ANAGRAMS.—1. Hagerstown. 2. Trenton. 3. Carthage. 4. Omaha City. 5. St. Paul. 6. Galveston. 7. Manchester. 8. Baton Rouge. 9. Indianapolis. 10. Fayetteville. 11. Rochester. 12. Easton. 13. Waterville. 14. Eaton. 15. Charlotte. 16. Carson City.

CROSS PUZZLE—

C A T
A B B
O R E
G A S
P R E D E C E S S O R
A B R A C A D A B R A
P R E C E D E N T E D
G A R
E B B
A R M
S A G

WORD SQUARES—

I.	II.
H O N O R	L O R A
O L I V E	O V E R
N I L E S	R E N T
O V E R T	A R T S
R E S T S	

PROBLEM.—49, 64, 87 plus rods.

RECEIPTS.

BEEF OR VEAL OLIVES—*Ingredients*—Slices of veal or beef, anchovies, herbs, mace, thin slices of bacon.

Mode.—Spread upon each slice of meat some of the anchovy, herbs, &c., seasoned with pepper or cayenne, lay a thin slice of bacon over, roll up tight and tie round; put them into a saucepan with a little butter melted, when well browned take them out, thicken the butter with flour, add a little gravy, and stew the olives for a short time. Serve with a few slices of lemon.

BROILED CHICKENS.—Take those that are young and tender, cut them down the back and breast bone—wash and dry them. Lay them flat and skewer them down; season with pepper and salt, and broil one-half hour on hot coals. Stew the giblets in water enough to cover them. When done, mix flour and butter and a little parsley chopped fine, stir it in, and come to a boil. Take off—dish the chickens and pour the gravy over.

FRICASSEE.—Stew a large fowl in water, covered close, till tender—seasoning it with salt and pepper. Thicken the water with flour and butter—pour in some cream—boil and dish it.

SMOKED BEEFSTEAK.—Slice some onions and fry brown. Pound the meat with a hammer, fry it over a hot fire till it browns a little; turning each piece as soon as it has been a few seconds in the pan, to keep in the juice. Put it into any kind of saucepan that can be tightly covered, (a tin pail will answer,) pour water into the frying pan, and put this brown liquor, with the fried onions to the beef. Let it simmer slowly for an hour, or less if the beef be tender. Other seasoning may be added, according to taste, or to vary the dish, such as tomatoes, fresh or in ketchup, sage and summer savory, or a grated carrot. Young green onions, such as must be thinned out, are good cut up in it; pepper and salt as a matter of course; a teaspoonful of curry powder for those who can get it is a great improvement occasionally, or a few celery seeds.

DURABLE INK.—100 grains lunar caustic, 1 drachm gum arabic, into 1 oz. soft water. *Preparation water.*—1 oz. sal soda, 2 oz. soft water: a little gum arabic to stiffen the linen.